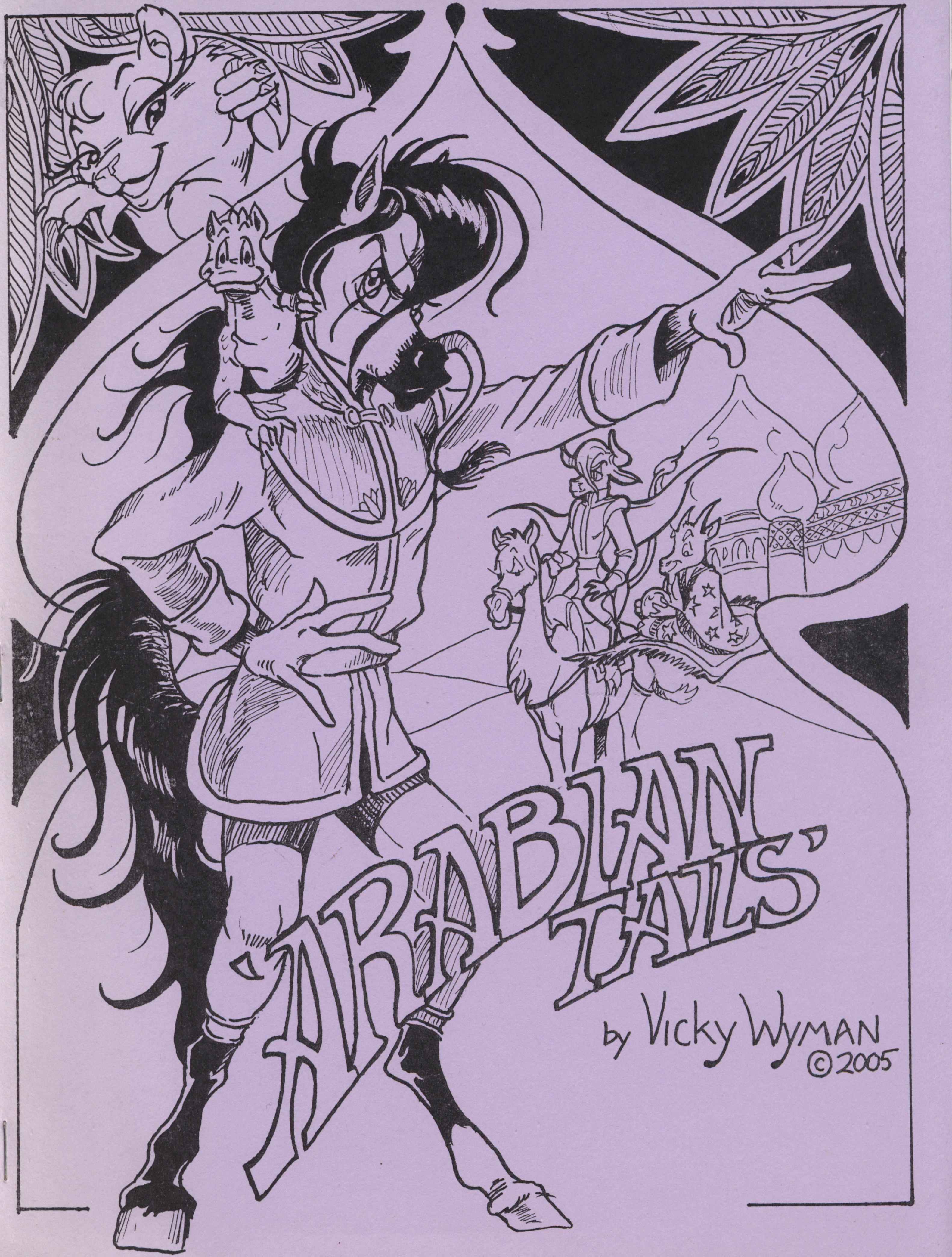

ARABIAN TAILS

by Vicky Wyman

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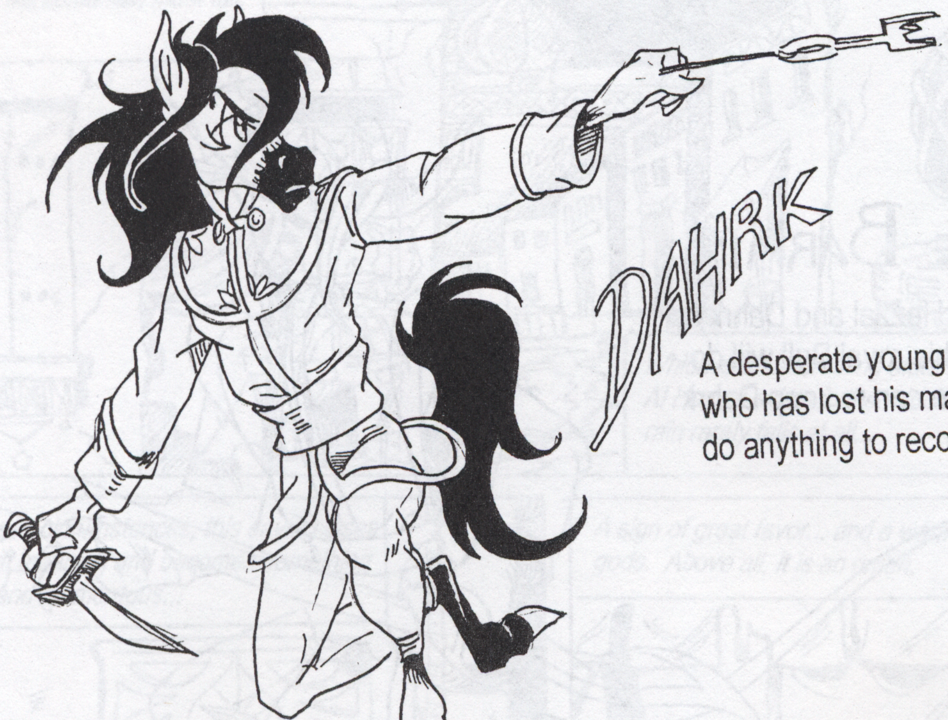
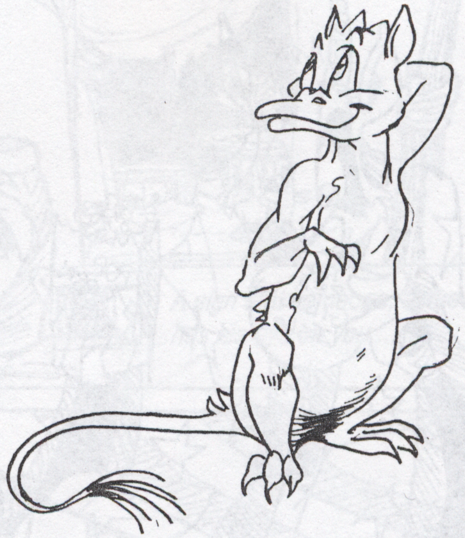


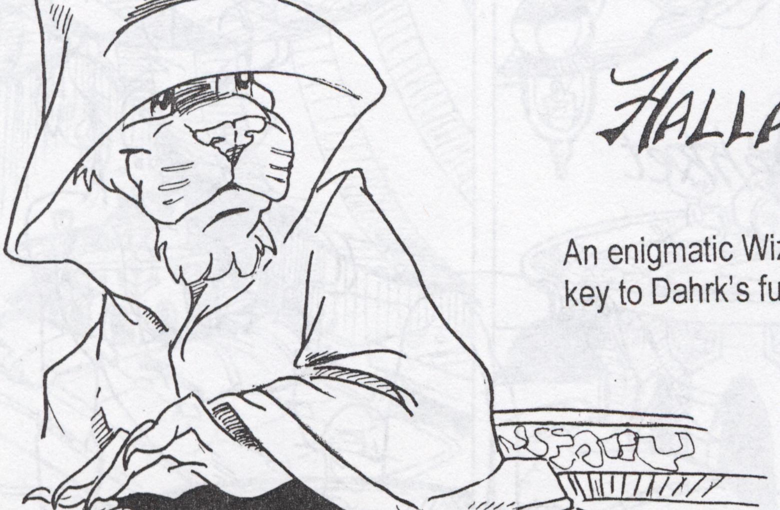
DAHRK

A desperate young Stud and a Sorcerer who has lost his magic, he is willing to do anything to recover his power.



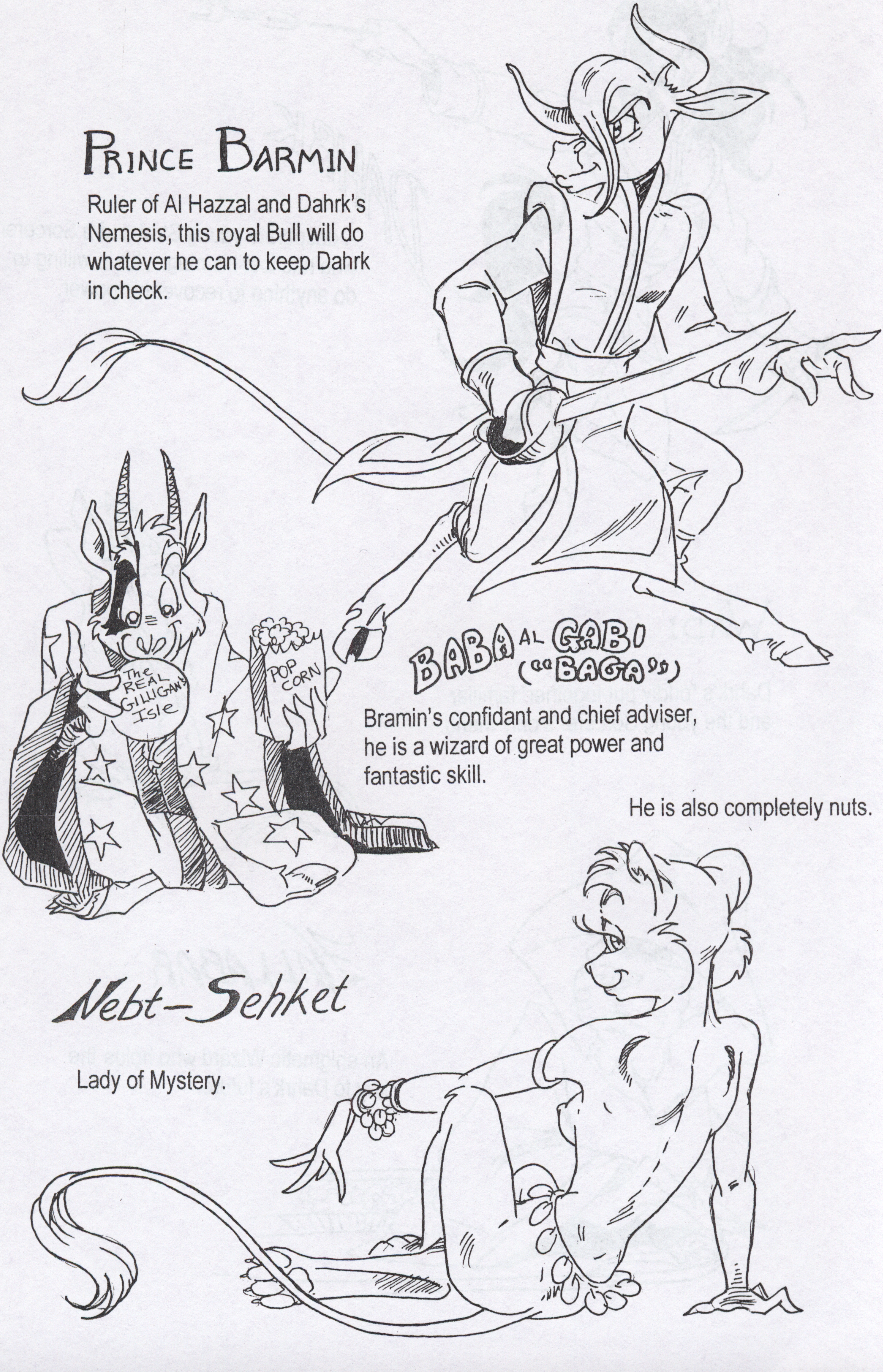
WADI

Dahrk's "oddly put-together" familiar and the young Sorcerer's only friend.



HALLABAR

An enigmatic Wizard who holds the key to Dahrk's future.


The REAL GILLIGAN's Isle
POP CORN

PRINCE BARMIN

Ruler of Al Hazzal and Dahrk's Nemesis, this royal Bull will do whatever he can to keep Dahrk in check.

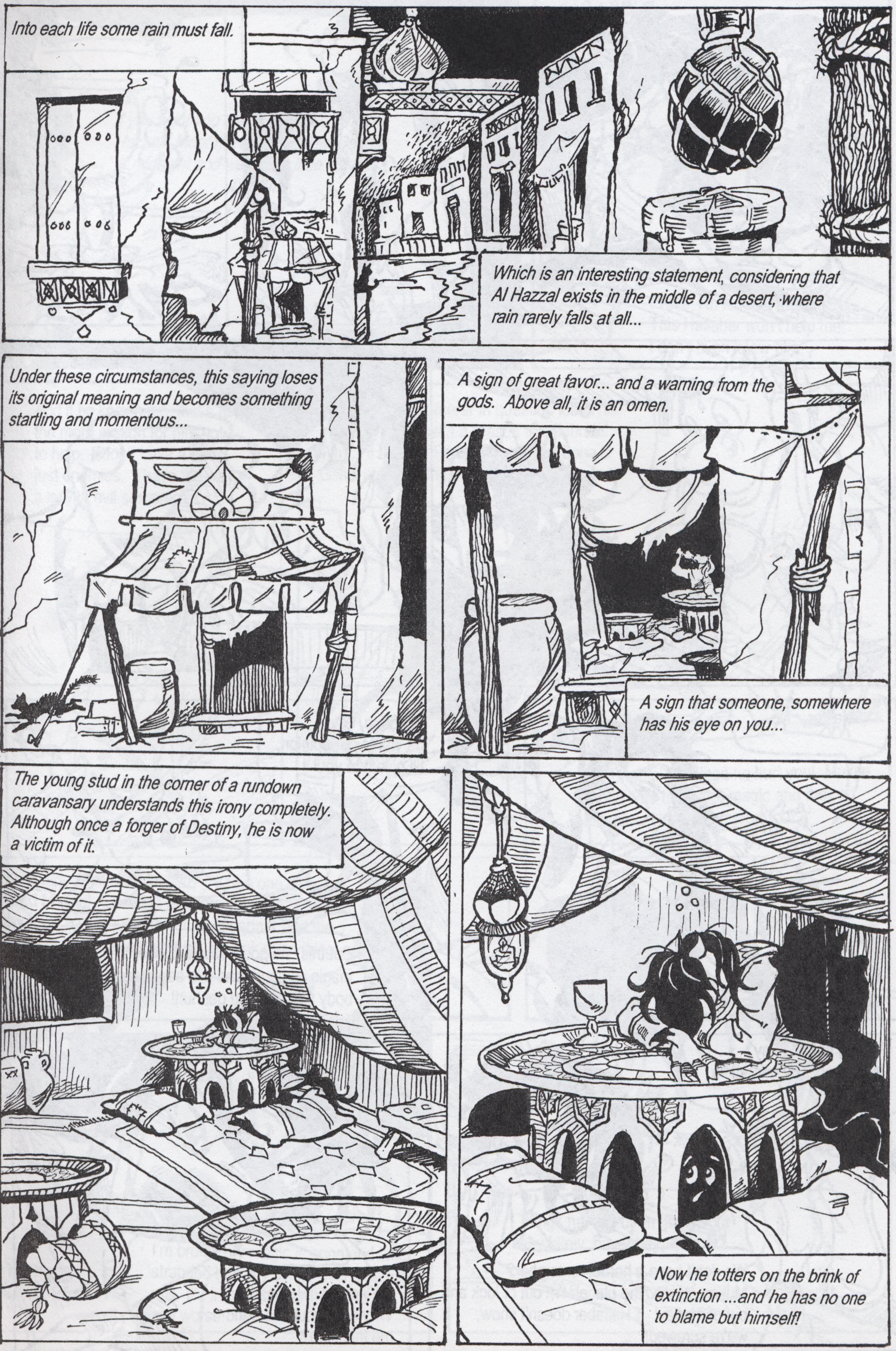
BABA AL GABI ("BAGA")

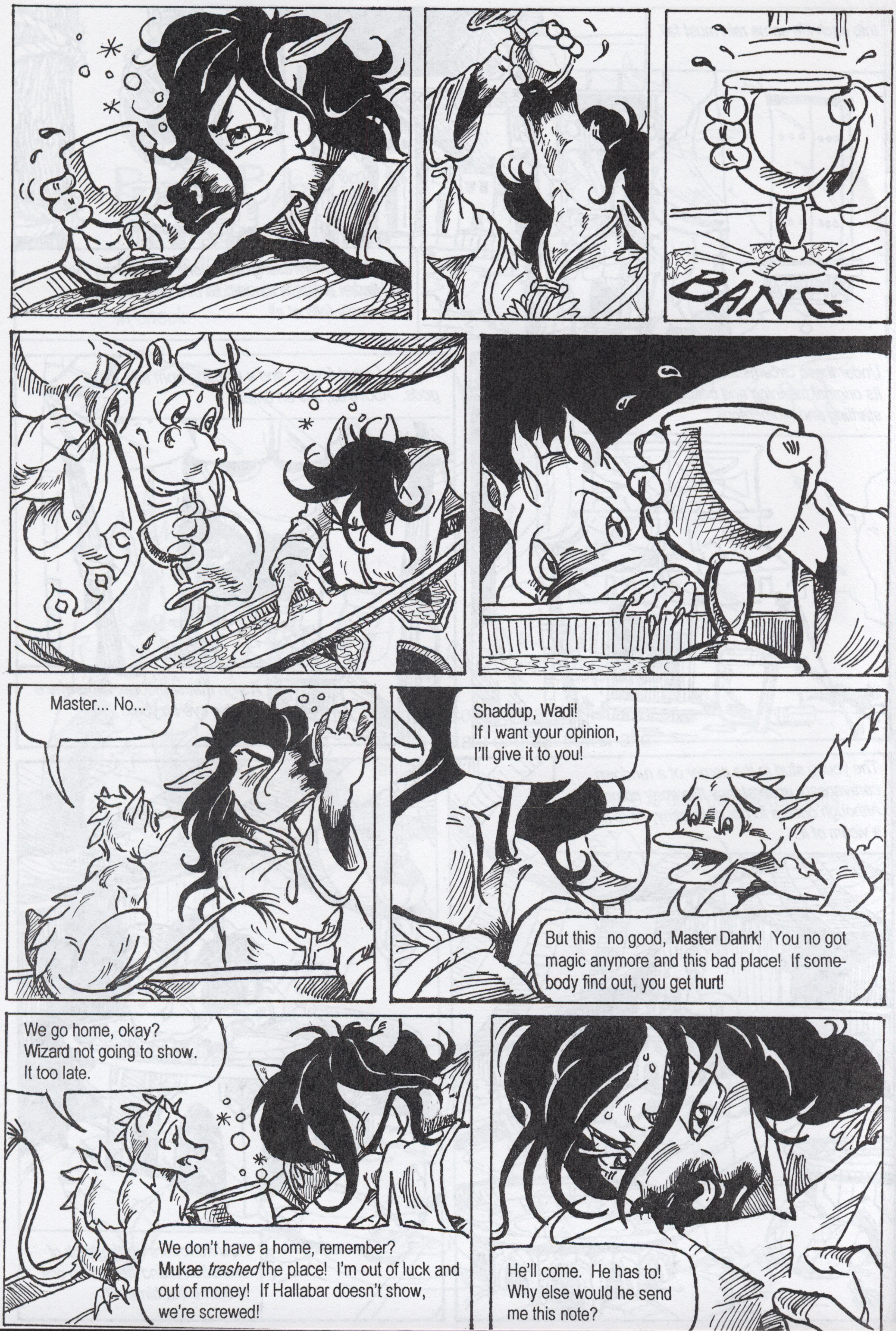
Bramin's confidant and chief adviser, he is a wizard of great power and fantastic skill.

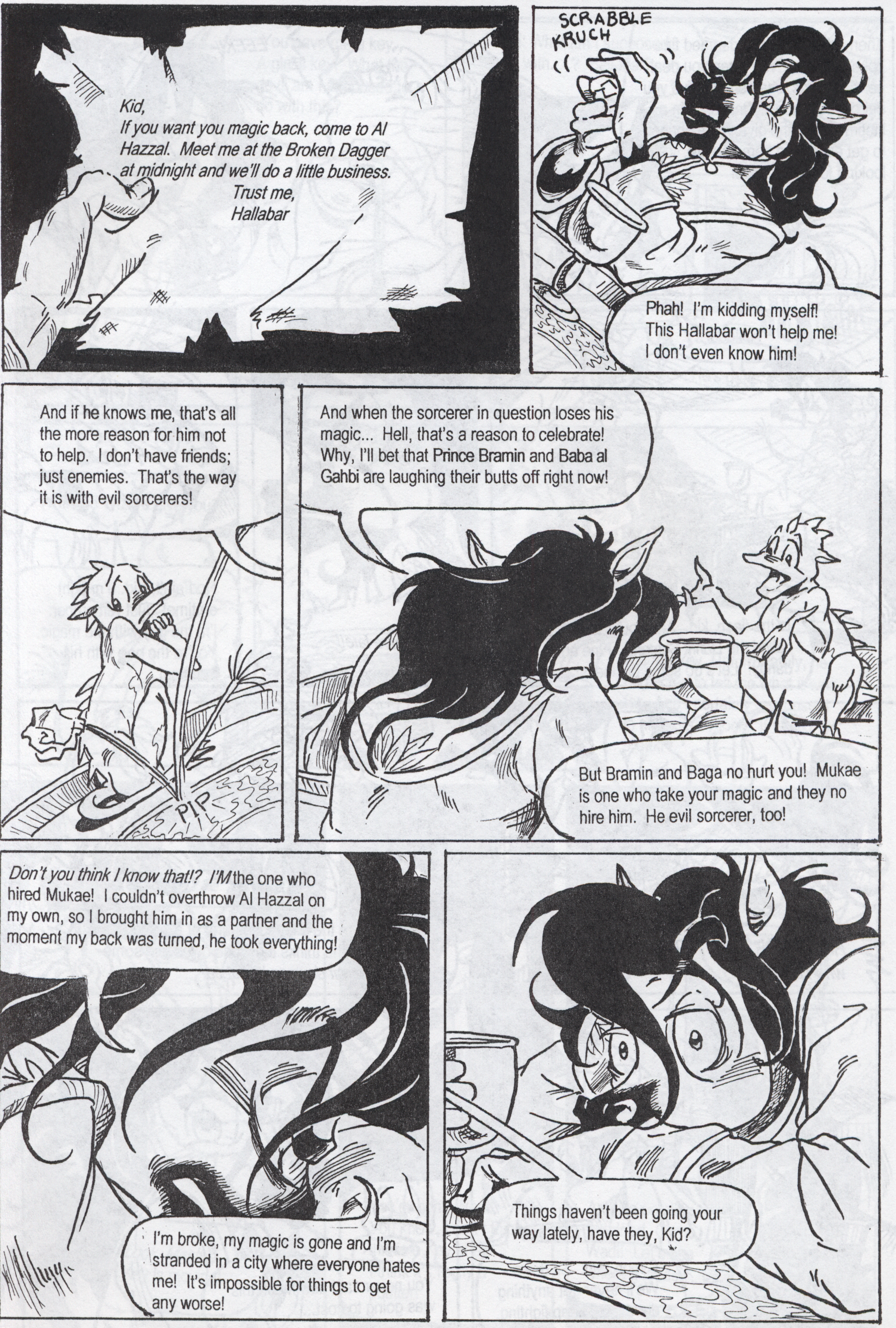
He is also completely nuts.

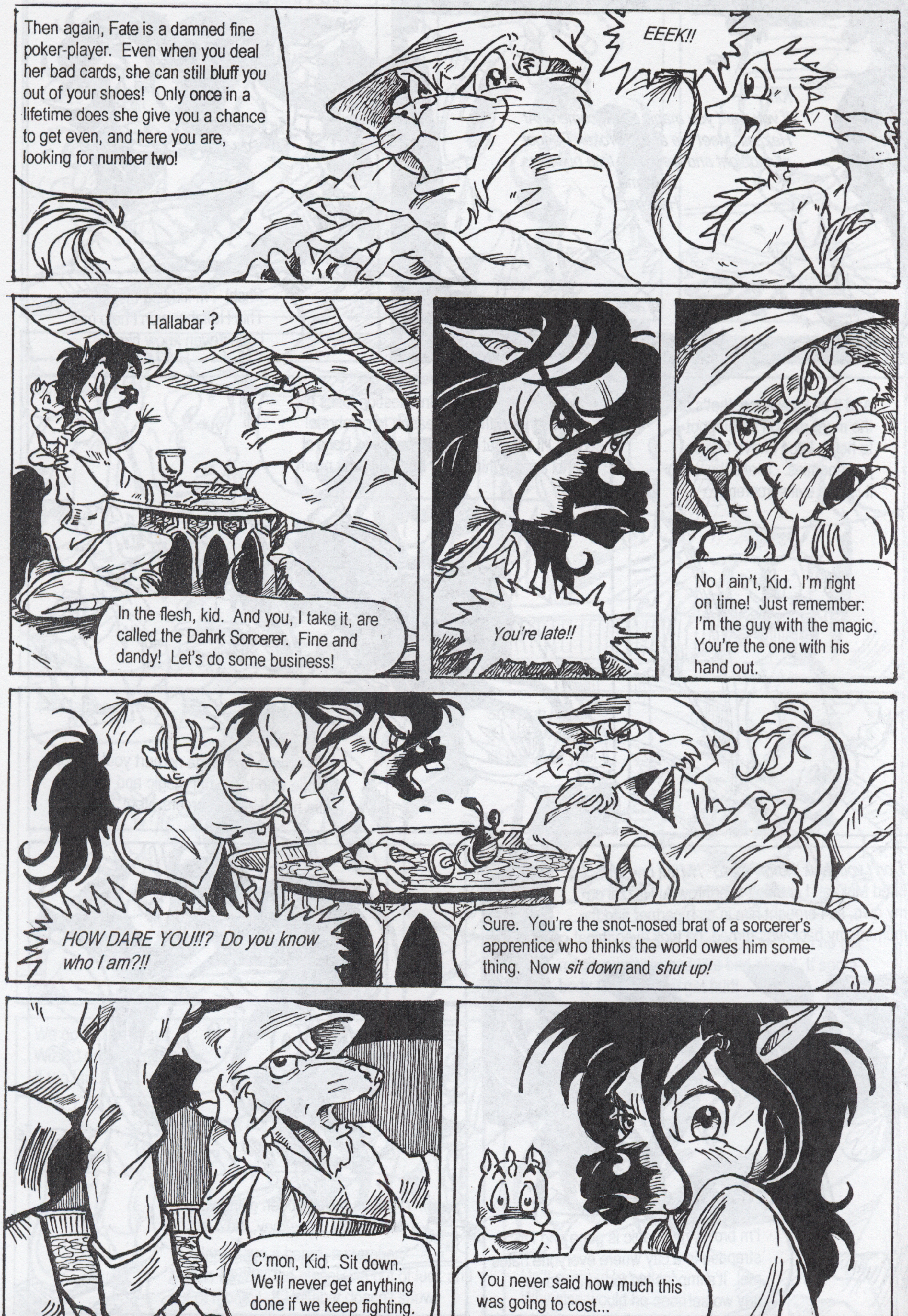
Nebt-Sehket

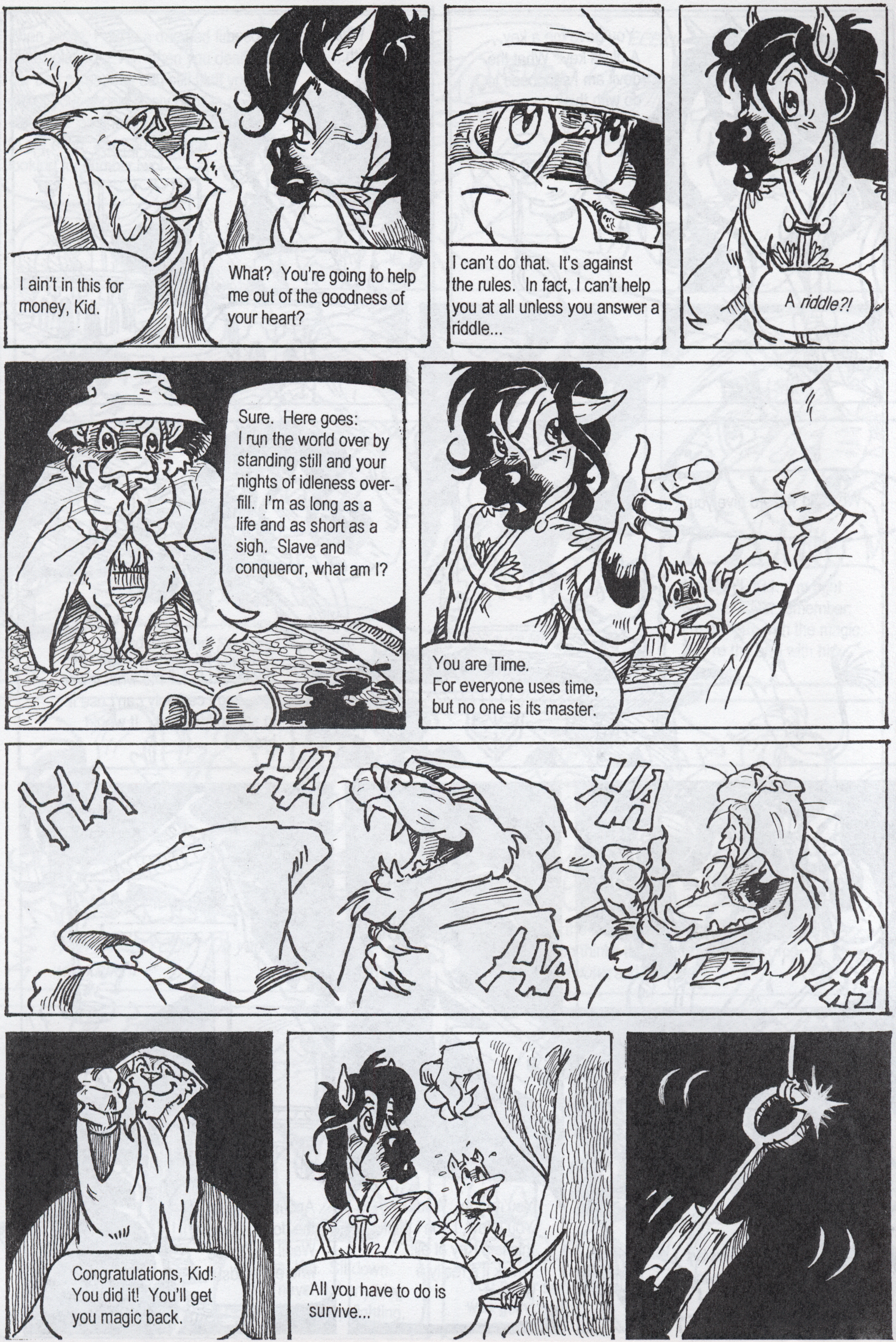
Lady of Mystery.

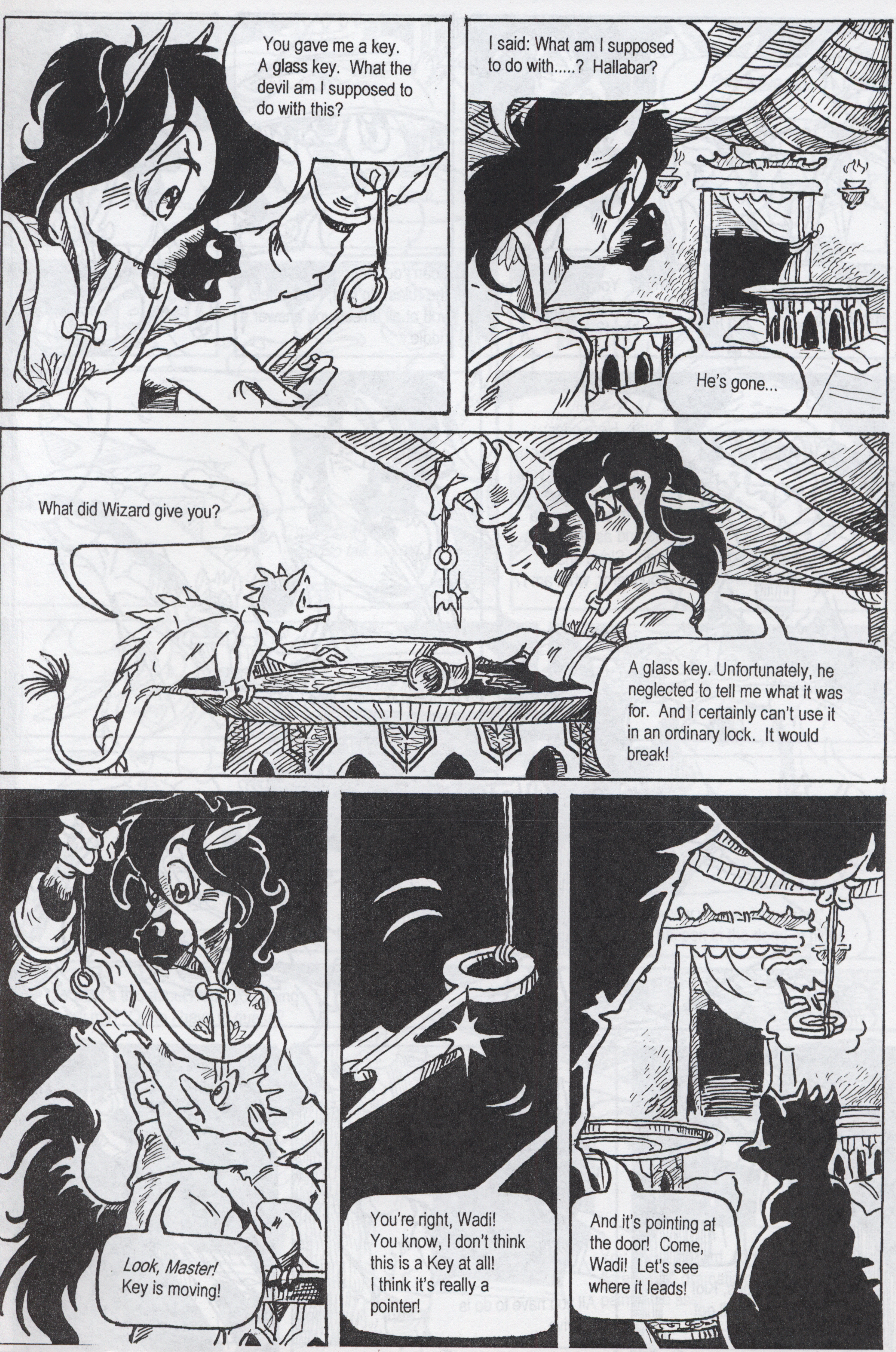

Into each life some rain must fall.
Which is an interesting statement, considering that Al Hazzal exists in the middle of a desert, where rain rarely falls at all...
Under these circumstances, this saying loses its original meaning and becomes something startling and momentous...
A sign of great favor... and a warning from the gods. Above all, it is an omen.
A sign that someone, somewhere has his eye on you...
The young stud in the corner of a rundown caravansary understands this irony completely. Although once a forger of Destiny, he is now a victim of it.
Now he totters on the brink of extinction ...and he has no one to blame but himself!

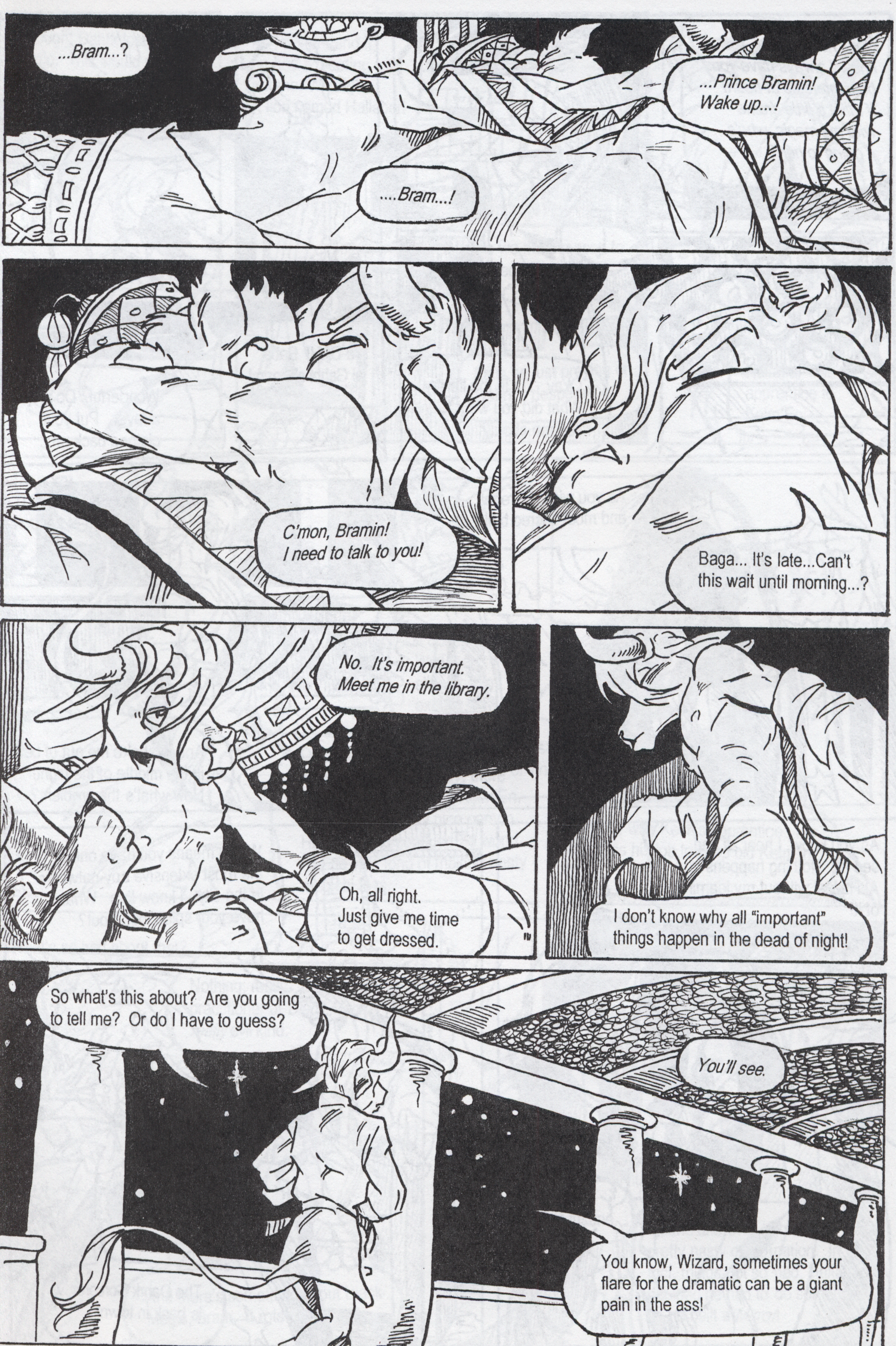

BANG
Master... No...
Shaddup, Wadi! If I want your opinion, I'll give it to you!
But this no good, Master Dahrk! You no got magic anymore and this bad place! If somebody find out, you get hurt!
We go home, okay? Wizard not going to show. It too late.
We don't have a home, remember? Mukae *trashed* the place! I'm out of luck and out of money! If Hallabar doesn't show, we're screwed!
He'll come. He has to! Why else would he send me this note?

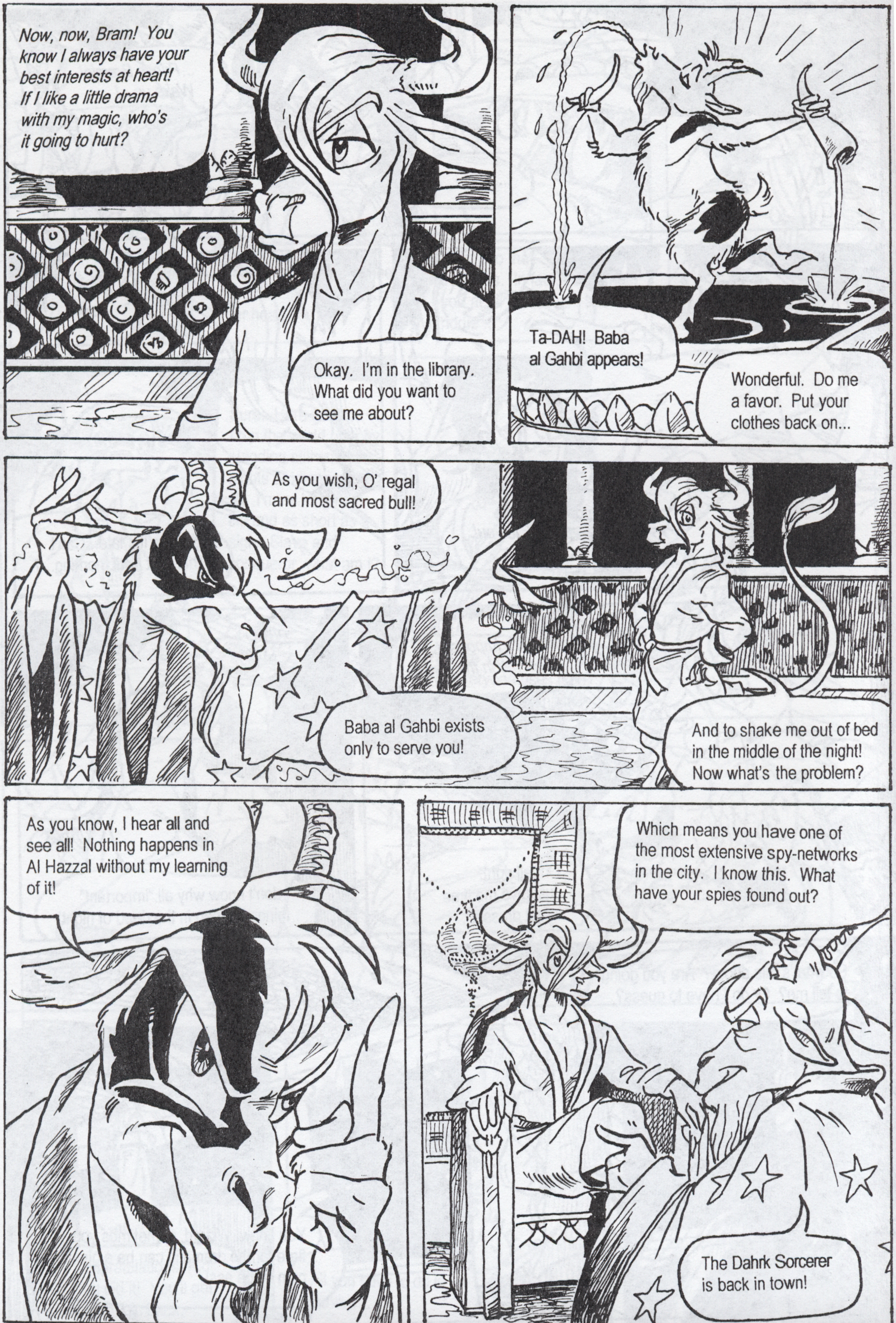

Kid,
If you want you magic back, come to Al Hazzal. Meet me at the Broken Dagger at midnight and we'll do a little business.
Trust me,
Hallabar
SCRABBLE
KRUCH
Phah! I'm kidding myself! This Hallabar won't help me! I don't even know him!
And if he knows me, that's all the more reason for him not to help. I don't have friends; just enemies. That's the way it is with evil sorcerers!
PIP
And when the sorcerer in question loses his magic... Hell, that's a reason to celebrate! Why, I'll bet that Prince Bramin and Baba al Gahbi are laughing their butts off right now!
But Bramin and Baga no hurt you! Mukae is one who take your magic and they no hire him. He evil sorcerer, too!
Don't you think I know that!? I'M the one who hired Mukae! I couldn't overthrow Al Hazzal on my own, so I brought him in as a partner and the moment my back was turned, he took everything!
I'm broke, my magic is gone and I'm stranded in a city where everyone hates me! It's impossible for things to get any worse!
Things haven't been going your way lately, have they, Kid?

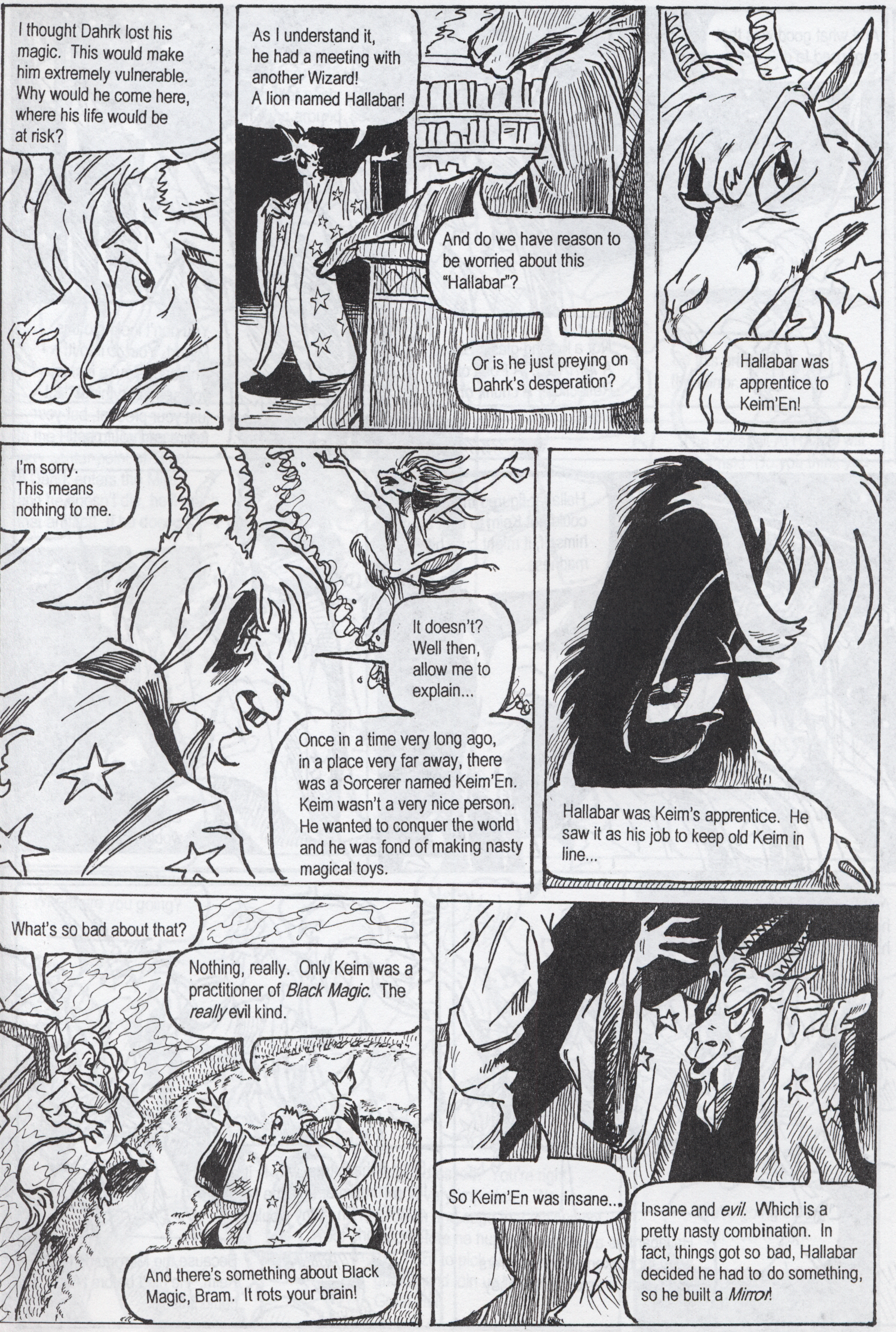

Then again, Fate is a damned fine poker-player. Even when you deal her bad cards, she can still bluff you out of your shoes! Only once in a lifetime does she give you a chance to get even, and here you are, looking for number two!
EEEK!!
Hallabar ?
In the flesh, kid. And you, I take it, are called the Dahrk Sorcerer. Fine and dandy! Let's do some business!
You're late!!
No I ain't, Kid. I'm right on time! Just remember: I'm the guy with the magic. You're the one with his hand out.
HOW DARE YOU!!? Do you know who I am?!!
Sure. You're the snot-nosed brat of a sorcerer's apprentice who thinks the world owes him something. Now *sit down* and *shut up!*
C'mon, Kid. Sit down. We'll never get anything done if we keep fighting.
You never said how much this was going to cost...

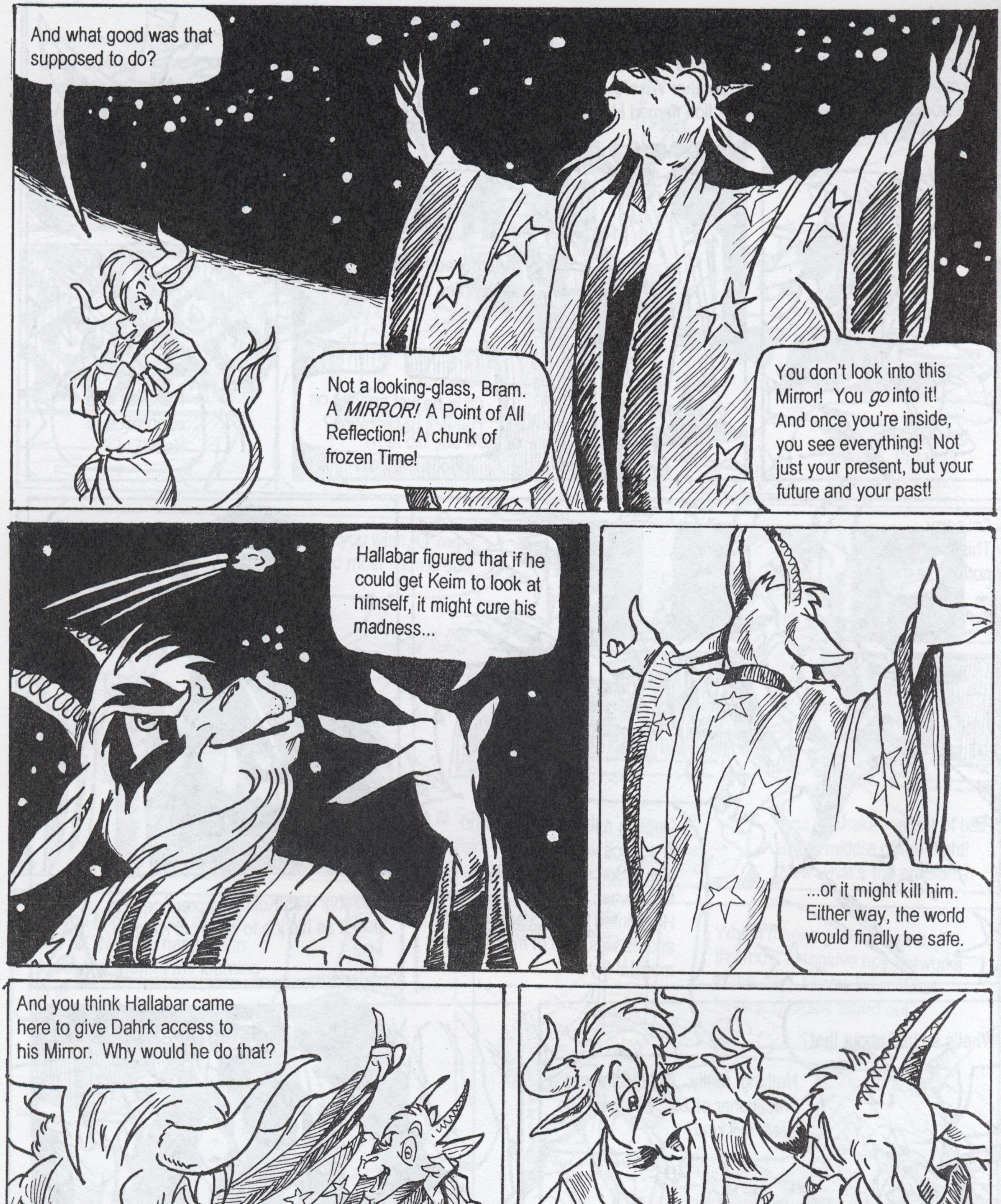

I ain't in this for money, Kid.
What? You're going to help me out of the goodness of your heart?
I can't do that. It's against the rules. In fact, I can't help you at all unless you answer a riddle...
A *riddle?!*
Sure. Here goes: I run the world over by standing still and your nights of idleness over-fill. I'm as long as a life and as short as a sigh. Slave and conqueror, what am I?
You are Time. For everyone uses time, but no one is its master.
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
Congratulations, Kid! You did it! You'll get you magic back.
All you have to do is survive...

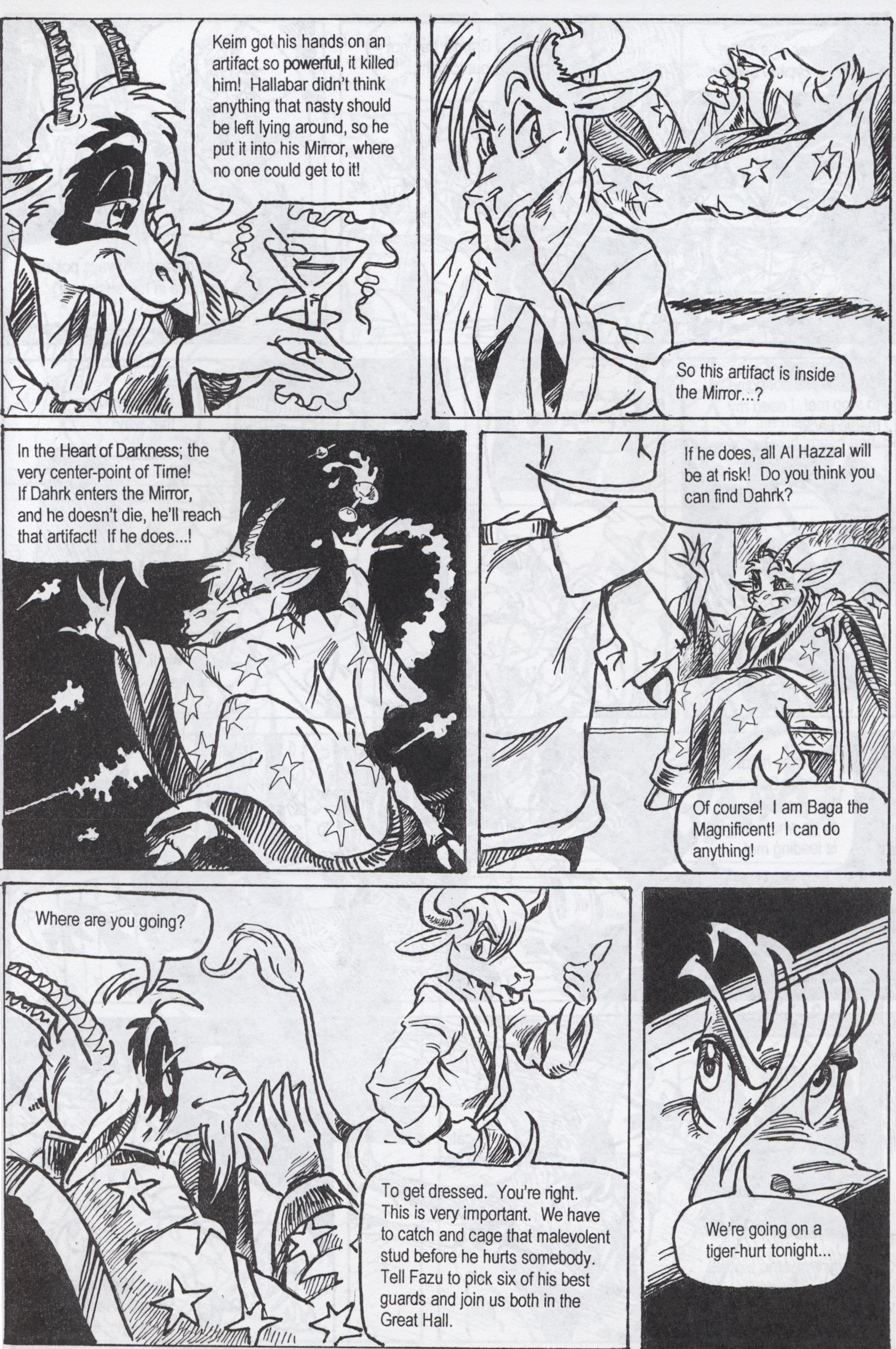

You gave me a key. A glass key. What the devil am I supposed to do with this?
I said: What am I supposed to do with.....? Hallabar?
He's gone...
What did Wizard give you?
A glass key. Unfortunately, he neglected to tell me what it was for. And I certainly can't use it in an ordinary lock. It would break!
Look, Master! Key is moving!
You're right, Wadi! You know, I don't think this is a Key at all! I think it's really a pointer!
And it's pointing at the door! Come, Wadi! Let's see where it leads!

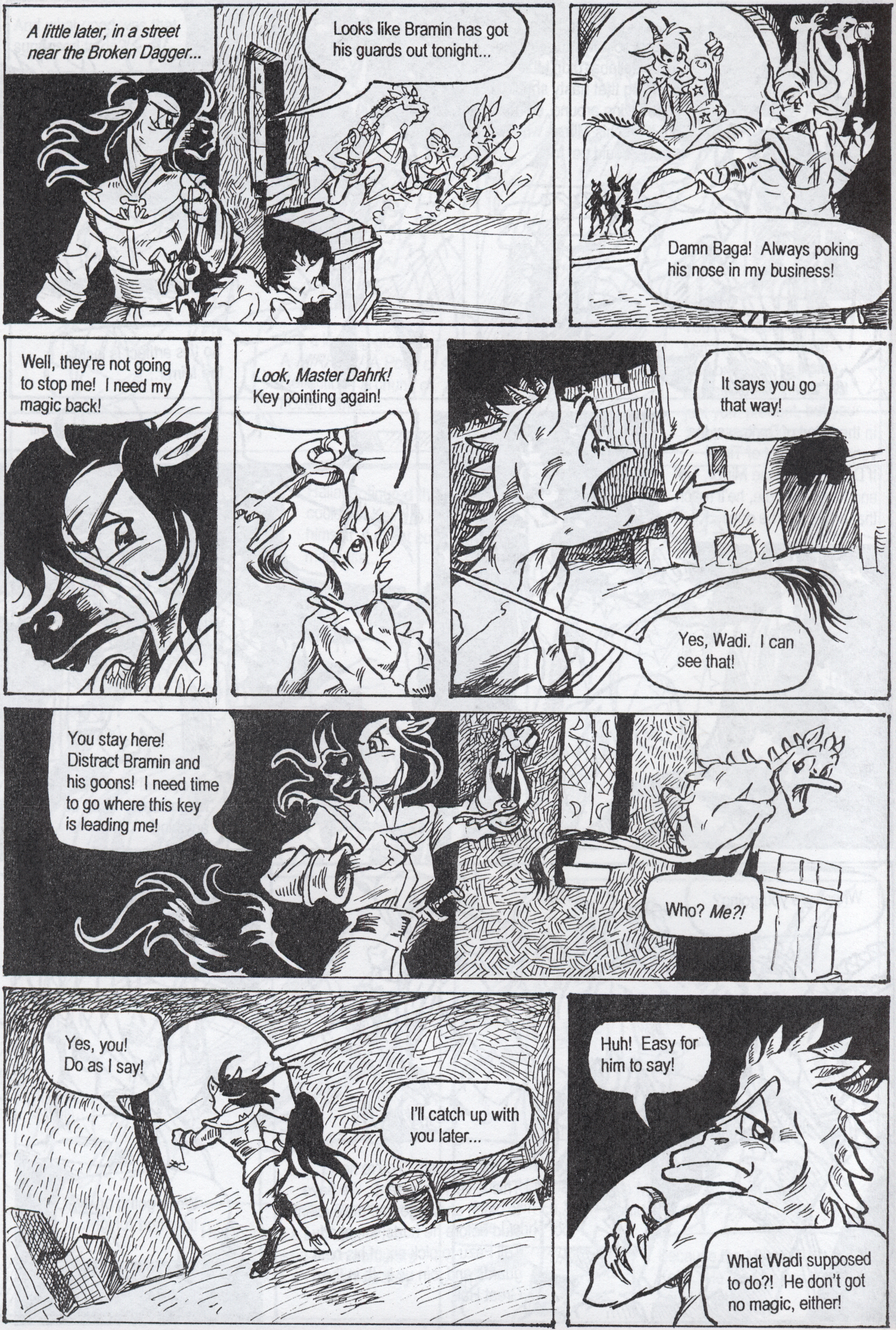

...Bram...?
...Prince Bramin! Wake up...!
....Bram...!
C'mon, Bramin! I need to talk to you!
Baga... It's late...Can't this wait until morning...?
No. It's important. Meet me in the library.
Oh, all right. Just give me time to get dressed.
I don't know why all "important" things happen in the dead of night!
So what's this about? Are you going to tell me? Or do I have to guess?
You'll see.
You know, Wizard, sometimes your flare for the dramatic can be a giant pain in the ass!

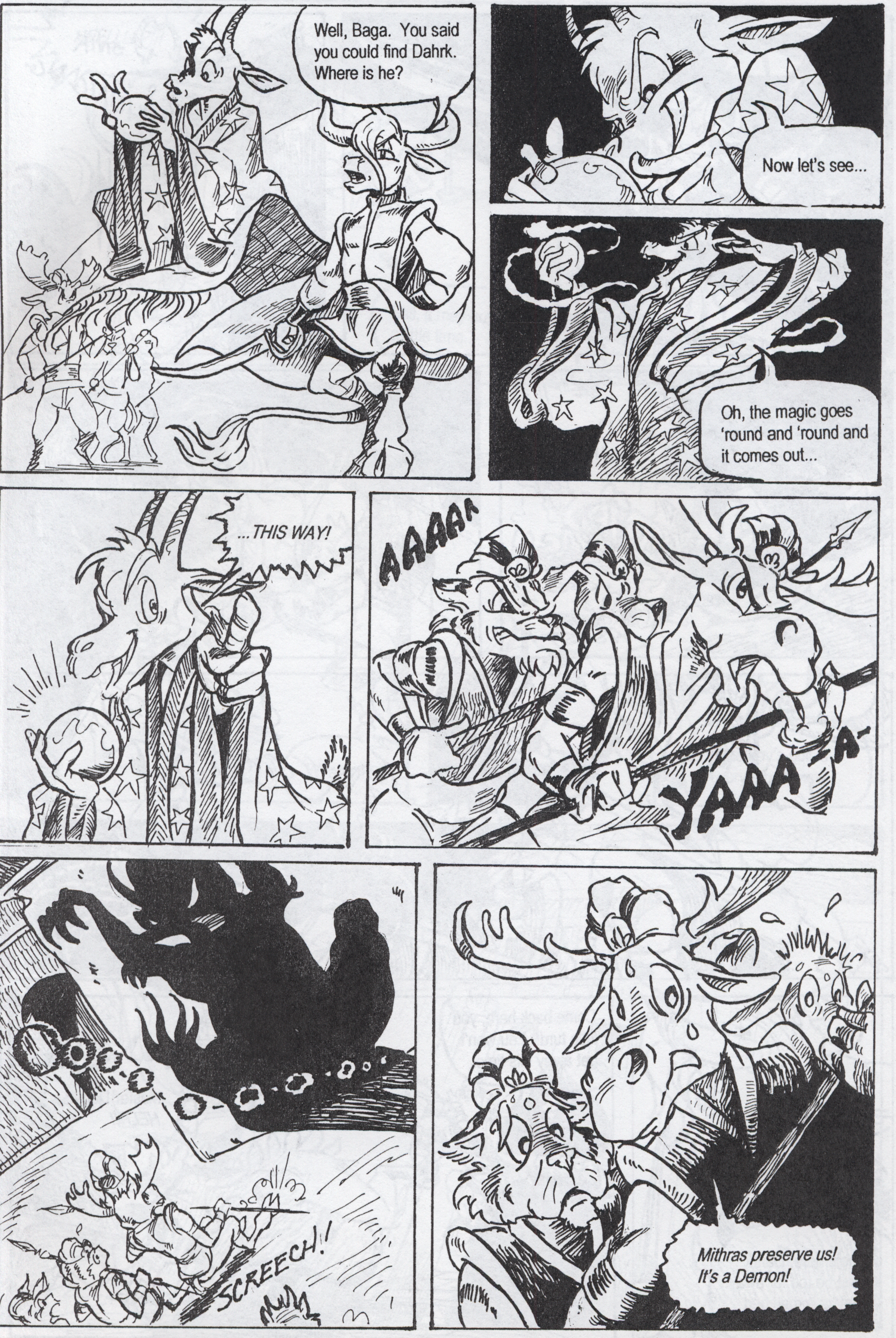

Now, now, Bram! You know I always have your best interests at heart! If I like a little drama with my magic, who's it going to hurt?
Okay. I'm in the library. What did you want to see me about?
Ta-DAH! Baba al Gahbi appears!
Wonderful. Do me a favor. Put your clothes back on...
As you wish, O' regal and most sacred bull!
Baba al Gahbi exists only to serve you!
And to shake me out of bed in the middle of the night! Now what's the problem?
As you know, I hear all and see all! Nothing happens in Al Hazzal without my learning of it!
Which means you have one of the most extensive spy-networks in the city. I know this. What have your spies found out?
The Dahrk Sorcerer is back in town!

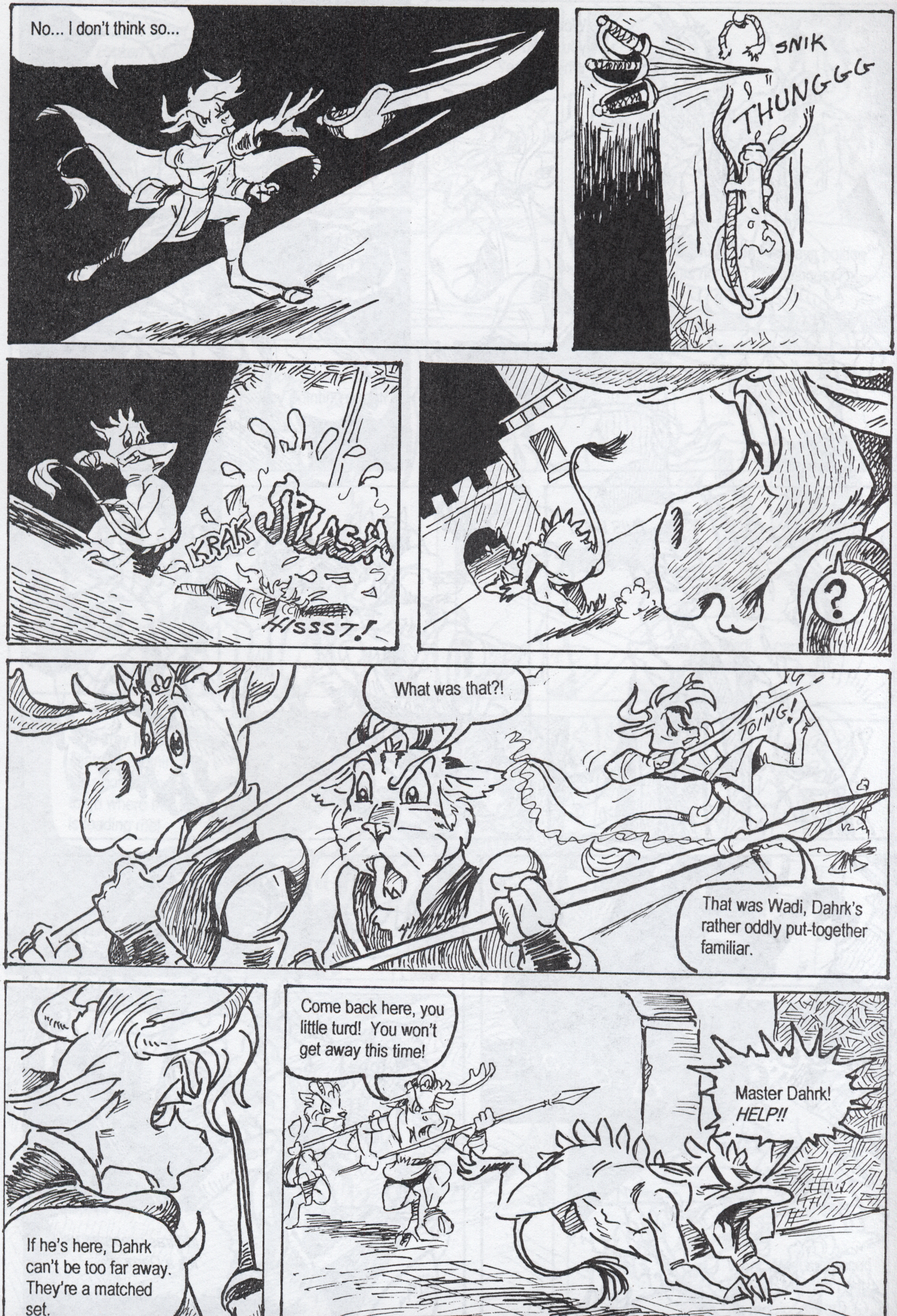

I thought Dahrk lost his magic. This would make him extremely vulnerable. Why would he come here, where his life would be at risk?
As I understand it, he had a meeting with another Wizard! A lion named Hallabar!
And do we have reason to be worried about this "Hallabar"?
Or is he just preying on Dahrk's desperation?
Hallabar was apprentice to Keim'En!
I'm sorry. This means nothing to me.
It doesn't? Well then, allow me to explain...
Once in a time very long ago, in a place very far away, there was a Sorcerer named Keim'En. Keim wasn't a very nice person. He wanted to conquer the world and he was fond of making nasty magical toys.
Hallabar was Keim's apprentice. He saw it as his job to keep old Keim in line...
What's so bad about that?
Nothing, really. Only Keim was a practitioner of *Black Magic*. The *really* evil kind.
And there's something about Black Magic, Bram. It rots your brain!
So Keim'En was insane...
Insane and *evil*. Which is a pretty nasty combination. In fact, things got so bad, Hallabar decided he had to do something, so he built a *Mirror*!

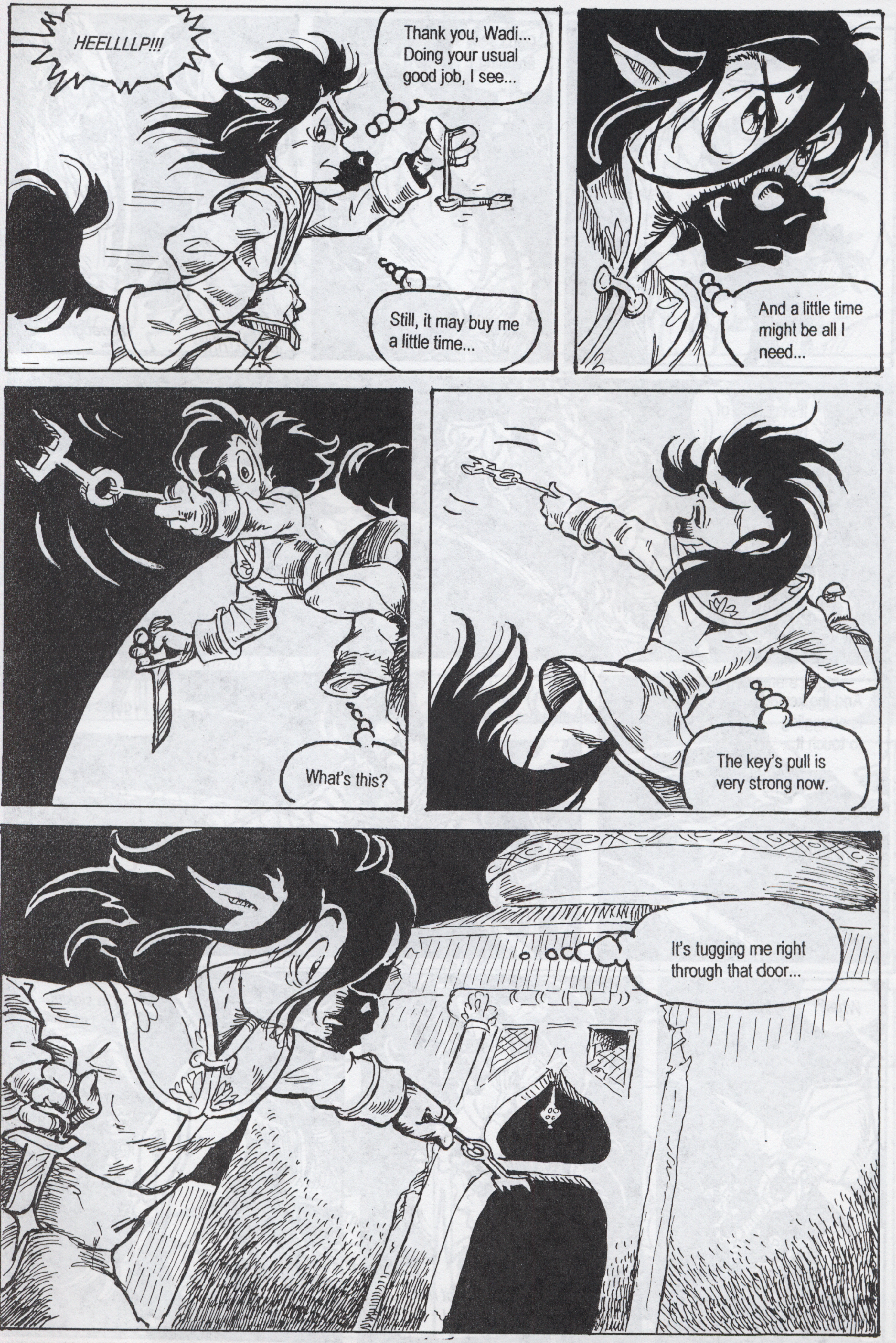

And what good was that supposed to do?
Not a looking-glass, Bram. A *MIRROR!* A Point of All Reflection! A chunk of frozen Time!
You don't look into this Mirror! You *go* into it! And once you're inside, you see everything! Not just your present, but your future and your past!
Hallabar figured that if he could get Keim to look at himself, it might cure his madness...
...or it might kill him. Either way, the world would finally be safe.
And you think Hallabar came here to give Dahrk access to his Mirror. Why would he do that?
Hallabar has a soft spot in his head for broken-down sorcerers and Dahrk is as broken as they come!
Even if that's true, why is it a bad thing? Hallabar built the Mirror to *cure* Keim'En. Why wouldn't it cure Dahrk, too?
Because the Mirror didn't cure Keim. He died before Hallabar could finish it

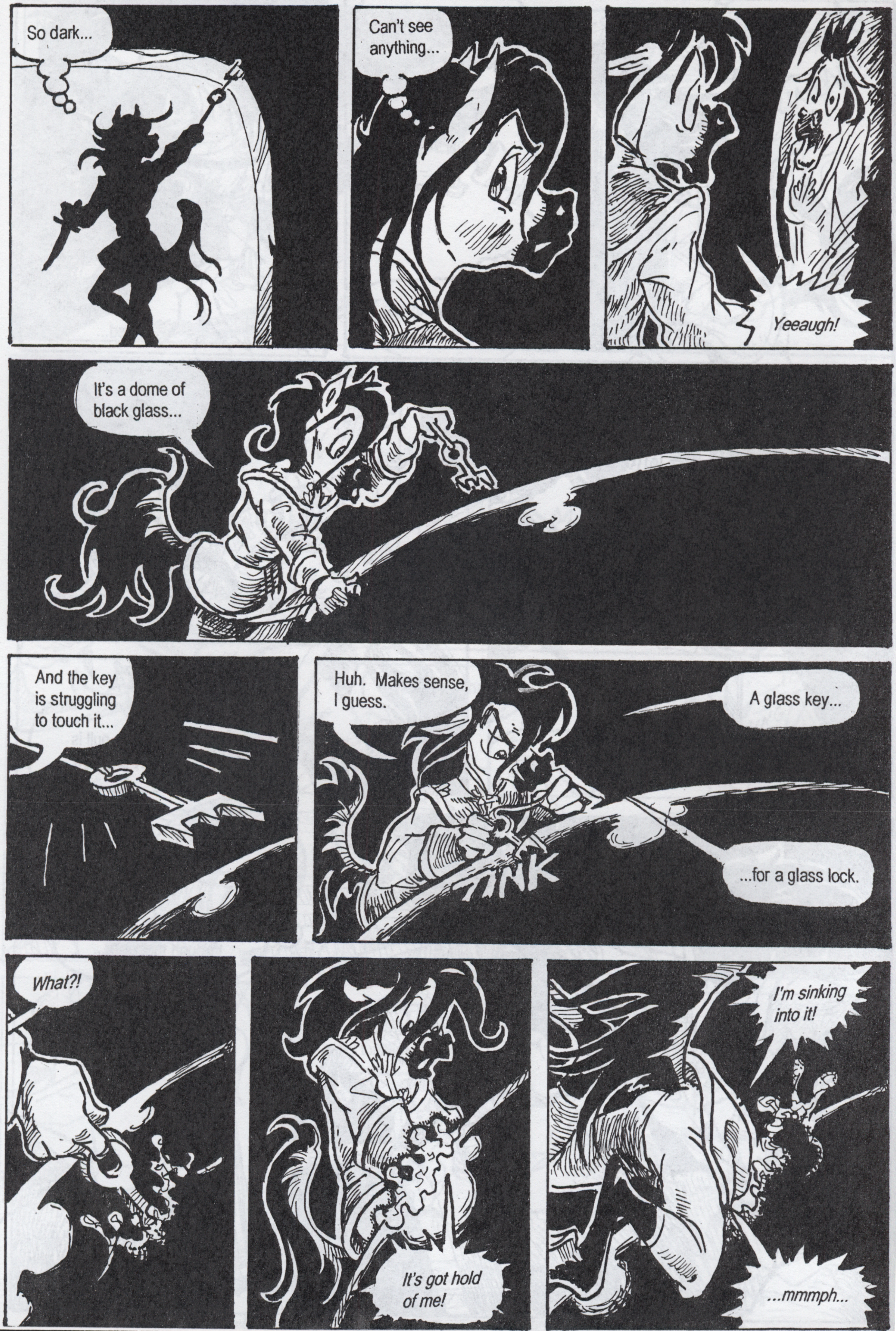

Keim got his hands on an artifact so **powerful**, it killed him! Hallabar didn't think anything that nasty should be left lying around, so he put it into his Mirror, where no one could get to it!
So this artifact is inside the Mirror...?
In the Heart of Darkness; the very center-point of Time! If Dahrk enters the Mirror, and he doesn't die, he'll reach that artifact! If he does...!
If he does, all Al Hazzal will be at risk! Do you think you can find Dahrk?
Of course! I am Baga the Magnificent! I can do anything!
Where are you going?
To get dressed. You're right. This is very important. We have to catch and cage that malevolent stud before he hurts somebody. Tell Fazu to pick six of his best guards and join us both in the Great Hall.
We're going on a tiger-hurt tonight...

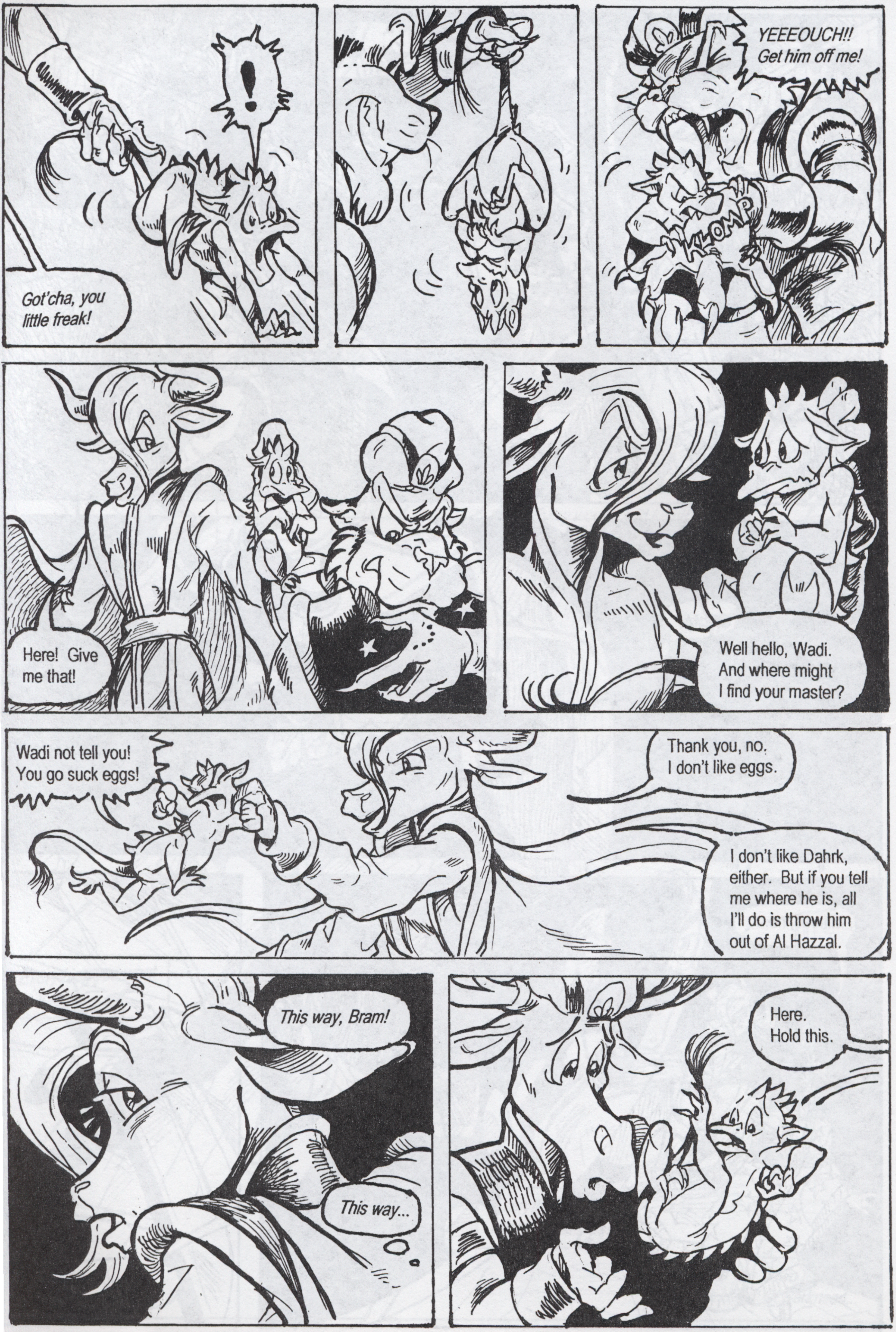

A little later, in a street near the Broken Dagger...
Looks like Bramin has got his guards out tonight...
Damn Baga! Always poking his nose in my business!
Well, they're not going to stop me! I need my magic back!
Look, Master Dahrk! Key pointing again!
It says you go that way!
Yes, Wadi. I can see that!
You stay here! Distract Bramin and his goons! I need time to go where this key is leading me!
Who? *Me?!*
Yes, you! Do as I say!
I'll catch up with you later...
Huh! Easy for him to say!
What Wadi supposed to do?! He don't got no magic, either!

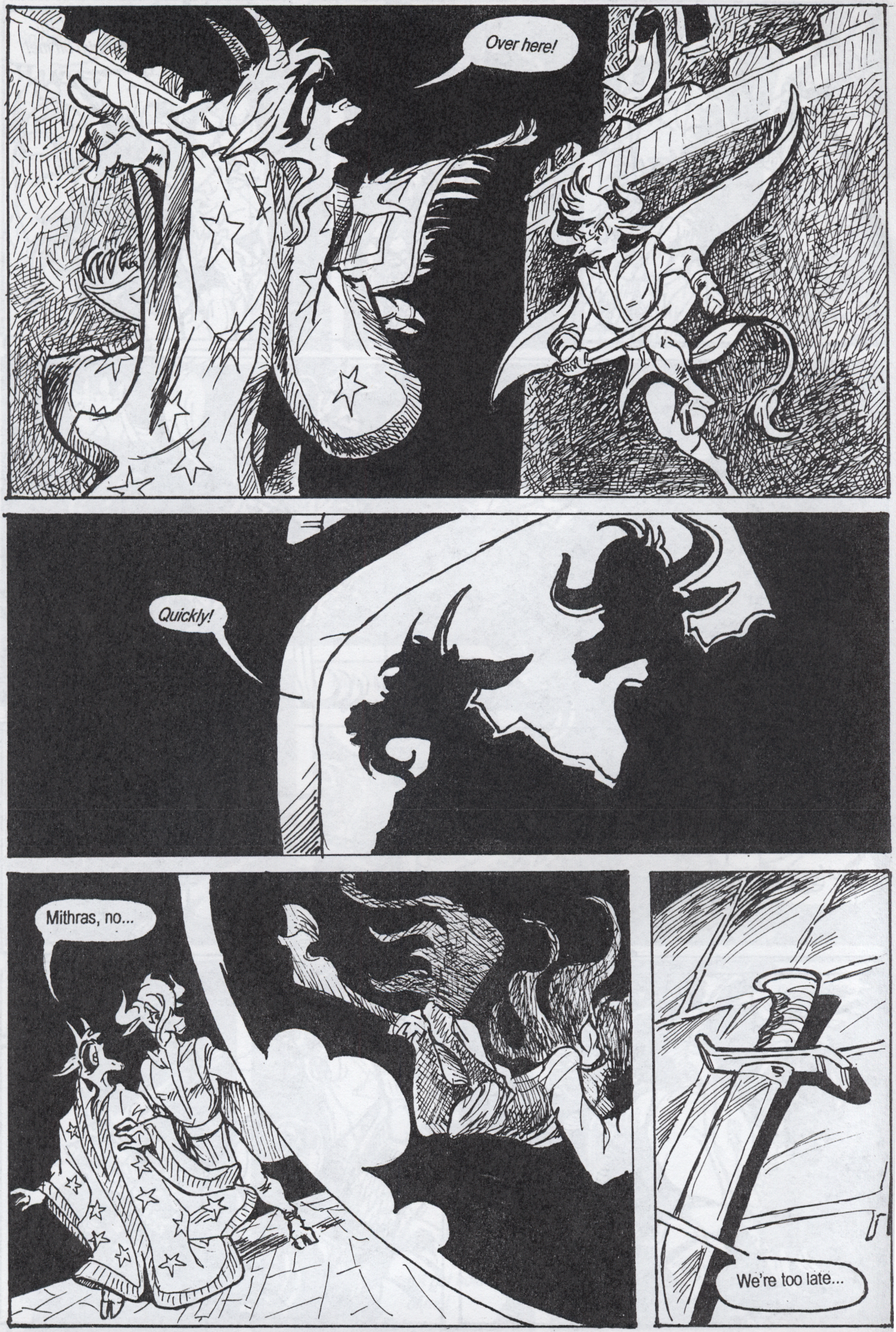

Well, Baga. You said you could find Dahrk. Where is he?
Now let's see...
Oh, the magic goes 'round and 'round and it comes out...
...THIS WAY!
AAAAA
YAAA-A-
SCREECH!
Mithras preserve us! It's a Demon!

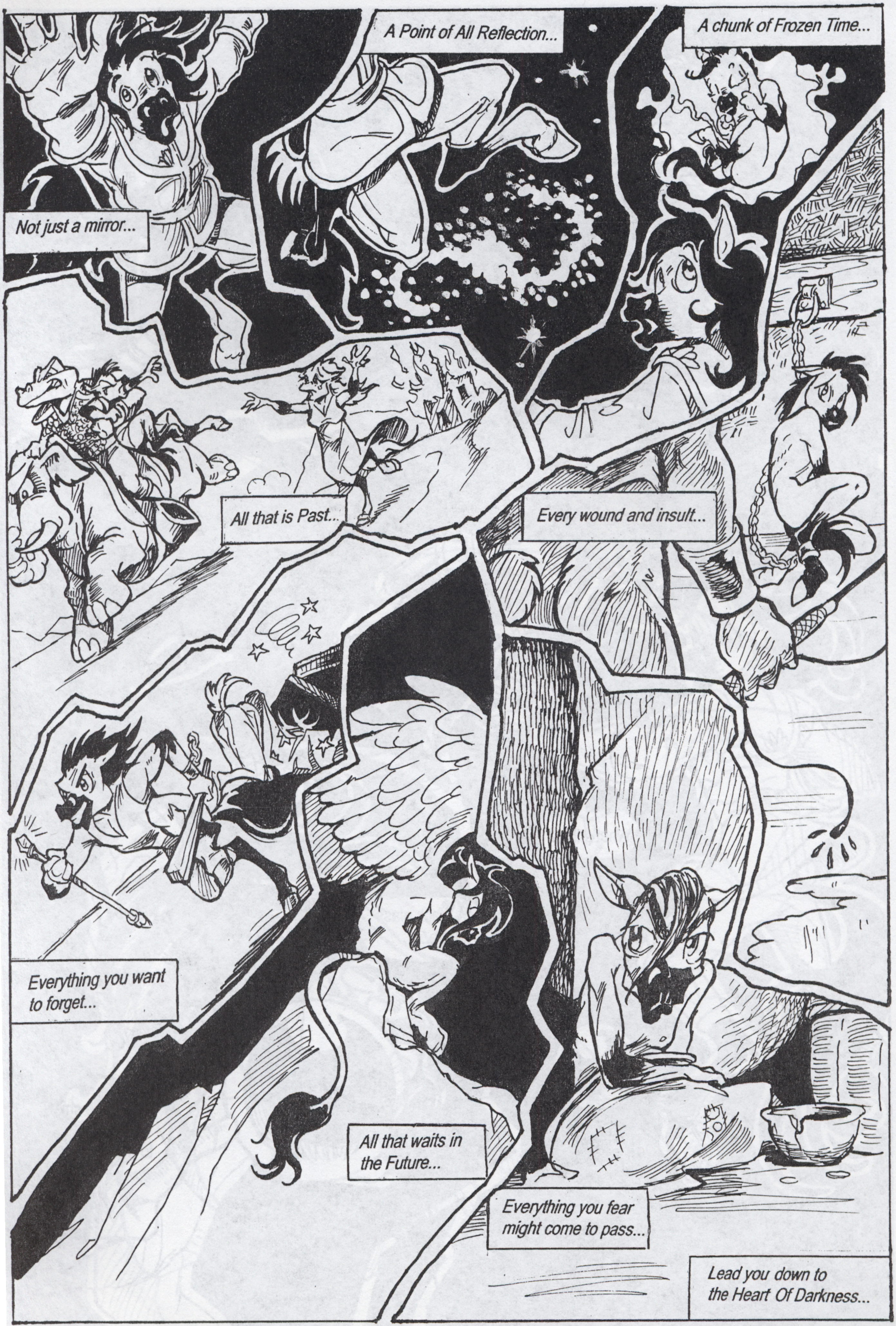

No... I don't think so...
SNIK
THUNGGG
KRAK
SPLASH
HISSST!
?
What was that?!
TOING!
That was Wadi, Dahrk's rather oddly put-together familiar.
If he's here, Dahrk can't be too far away. They're a matched set.
Come back here, you little turd! You won't get away this time!
Master Dahrk! *HELP!!*

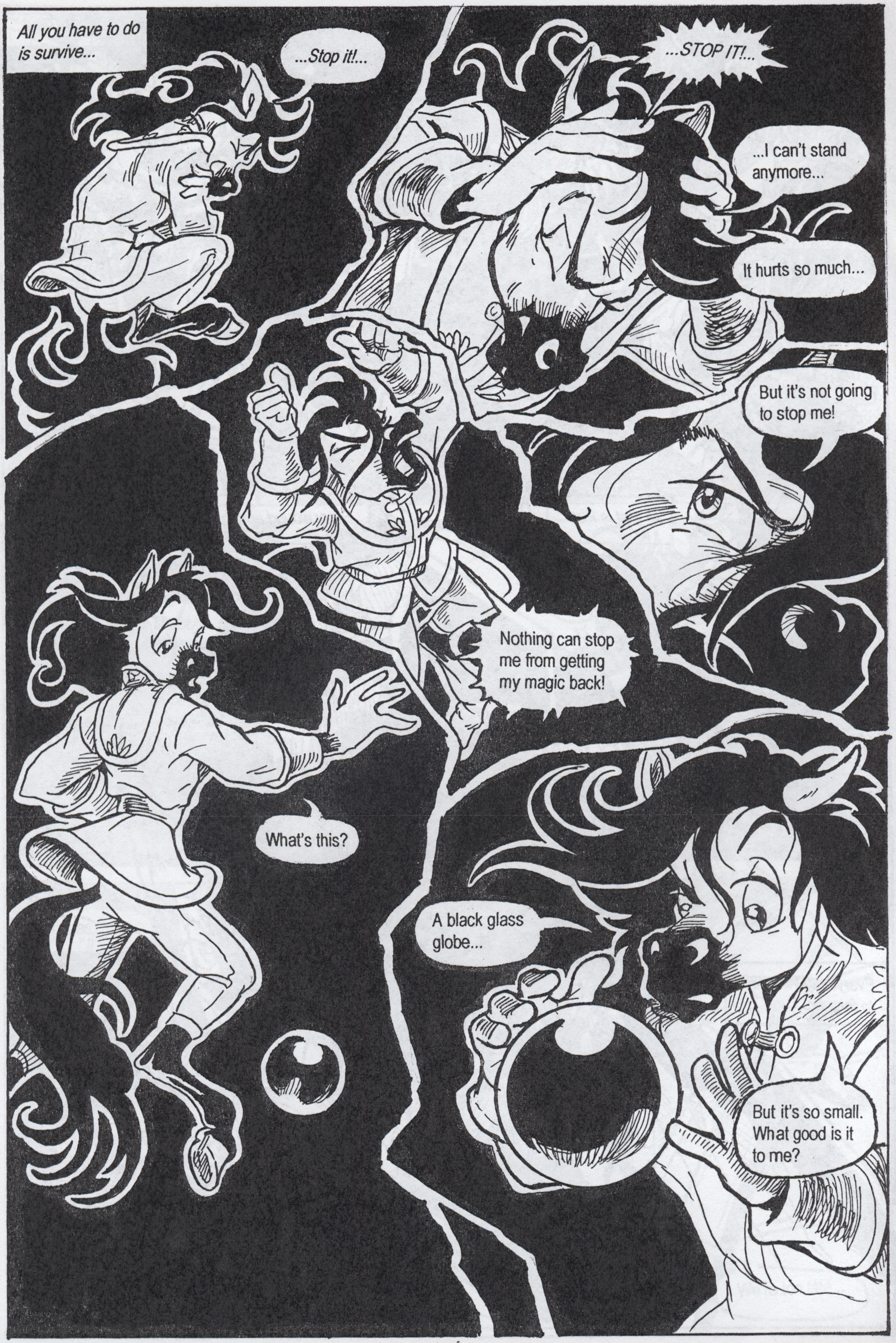

HEELLLLP!!!
Thank you, Wadi... Doing your usual good job, I see...
Still, it may buy me a little time...
And a little time might be all I need...
What's this?
The key's pull is very strong now.
It's tugging me right through that door...

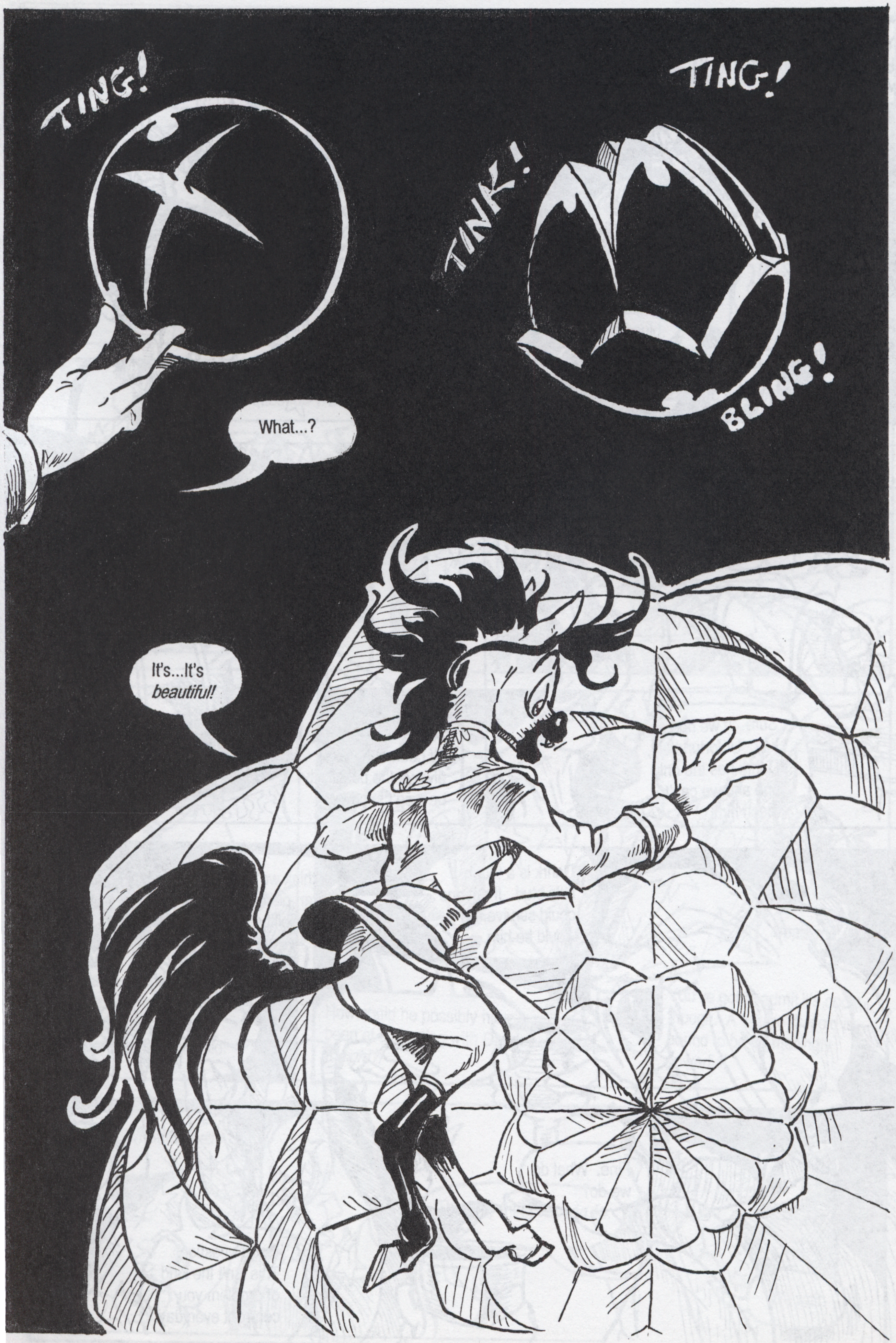

So dark...
Can't see anything...
Yeeaugh!
It's a dome of black glass...
And the key is struggling to touch it...
Huh. Makes sense, I guess.
A glass key...
ZINK
...for a glass lock.
What?!
It's got hold of me!
I'm sinking into it!
...mmmph...

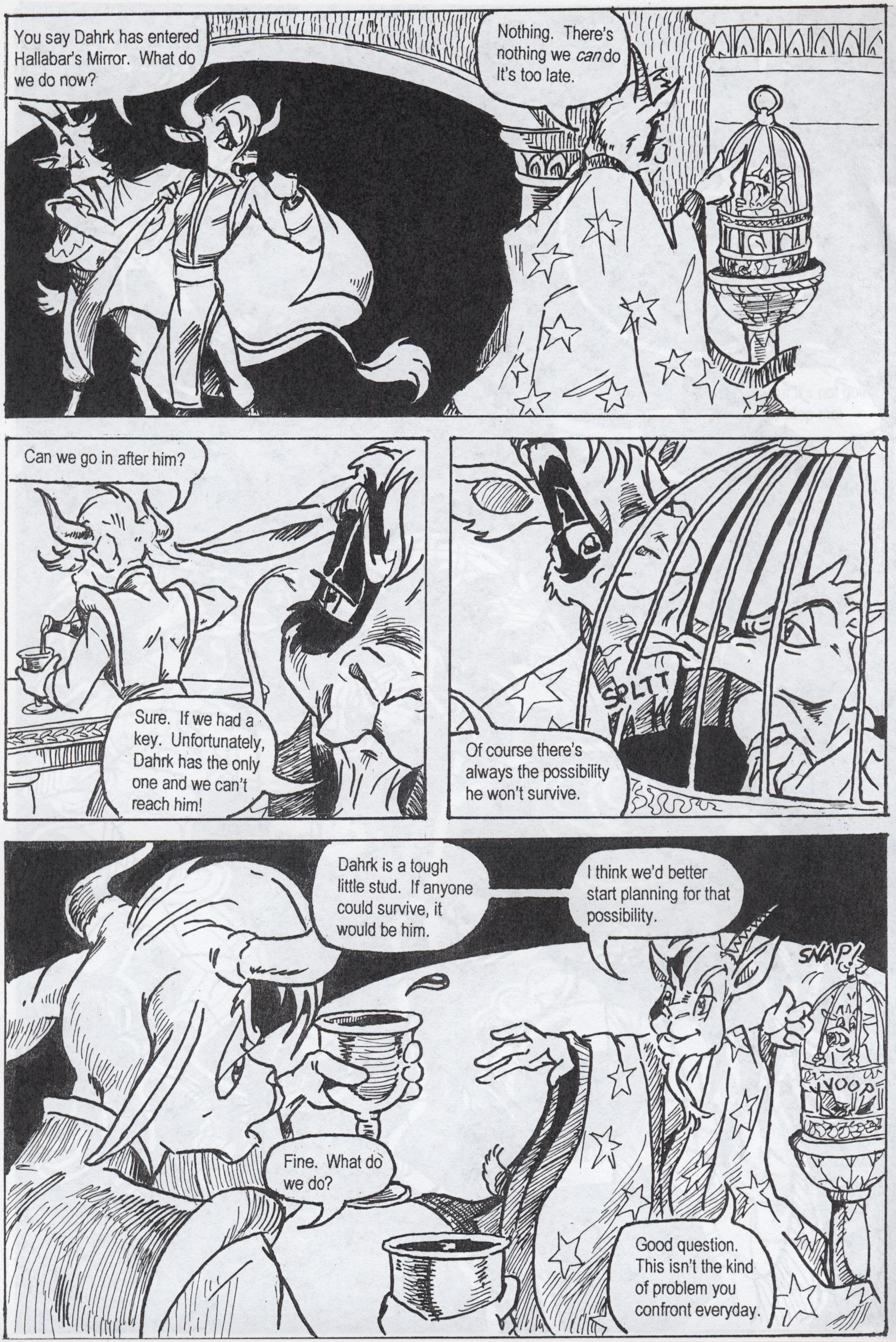

!
Got'cha, you little freak!
YEEEOUCH!! Get him off me!
KLOMP
Here! Give me that!
Well hello, Wadi. And where might I find your master?
Wadi not tell you! You go suck eggs!
Thank you, no. I don't like eggs.
I don't like Dahrk, either. But if you tell me where he is, all I'll do is throw him out of Al Hazzal.
This way, Bram!
This way...
Here. Hold this.

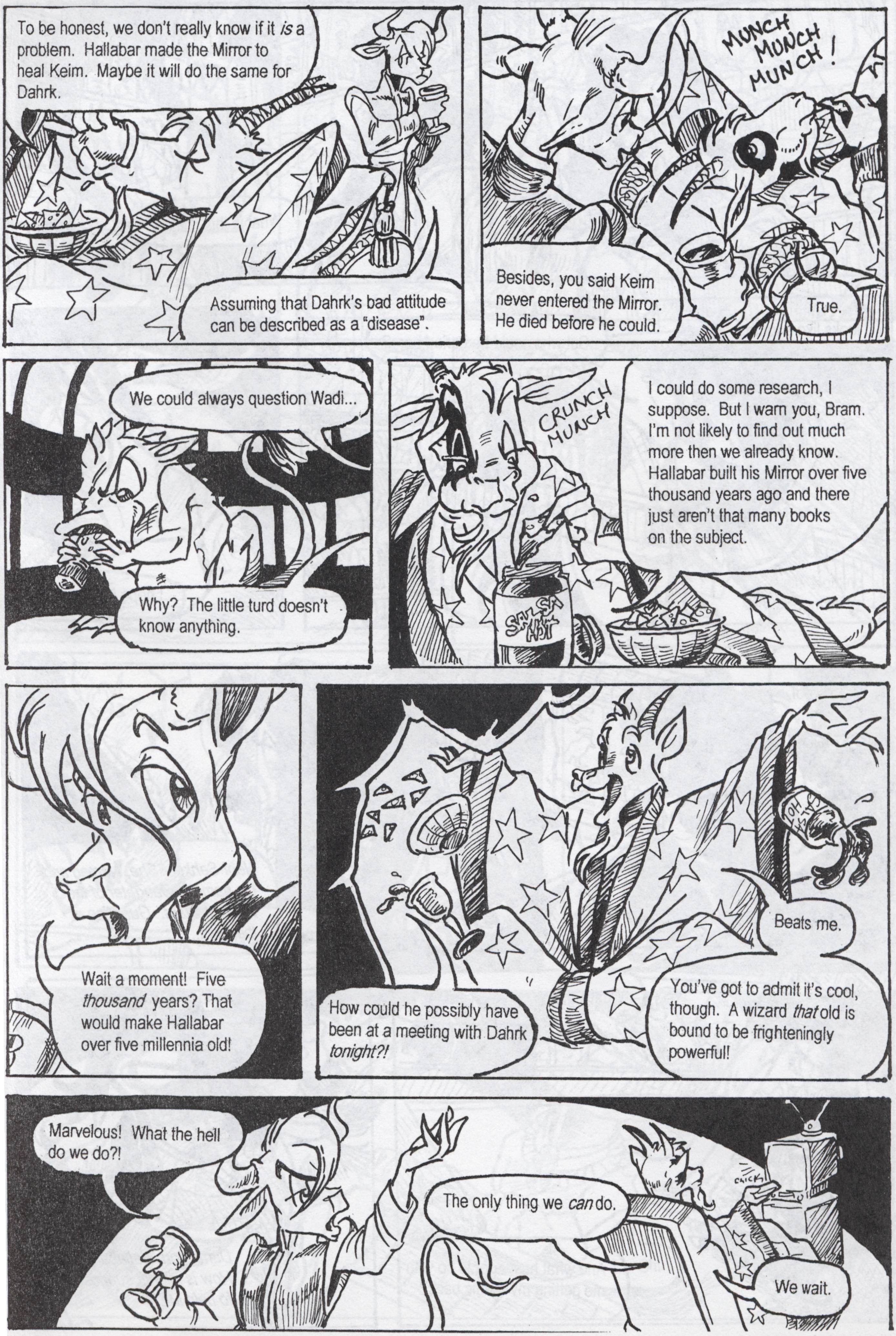

Over here!
Quickly!
Mithras, no...
We're too late...

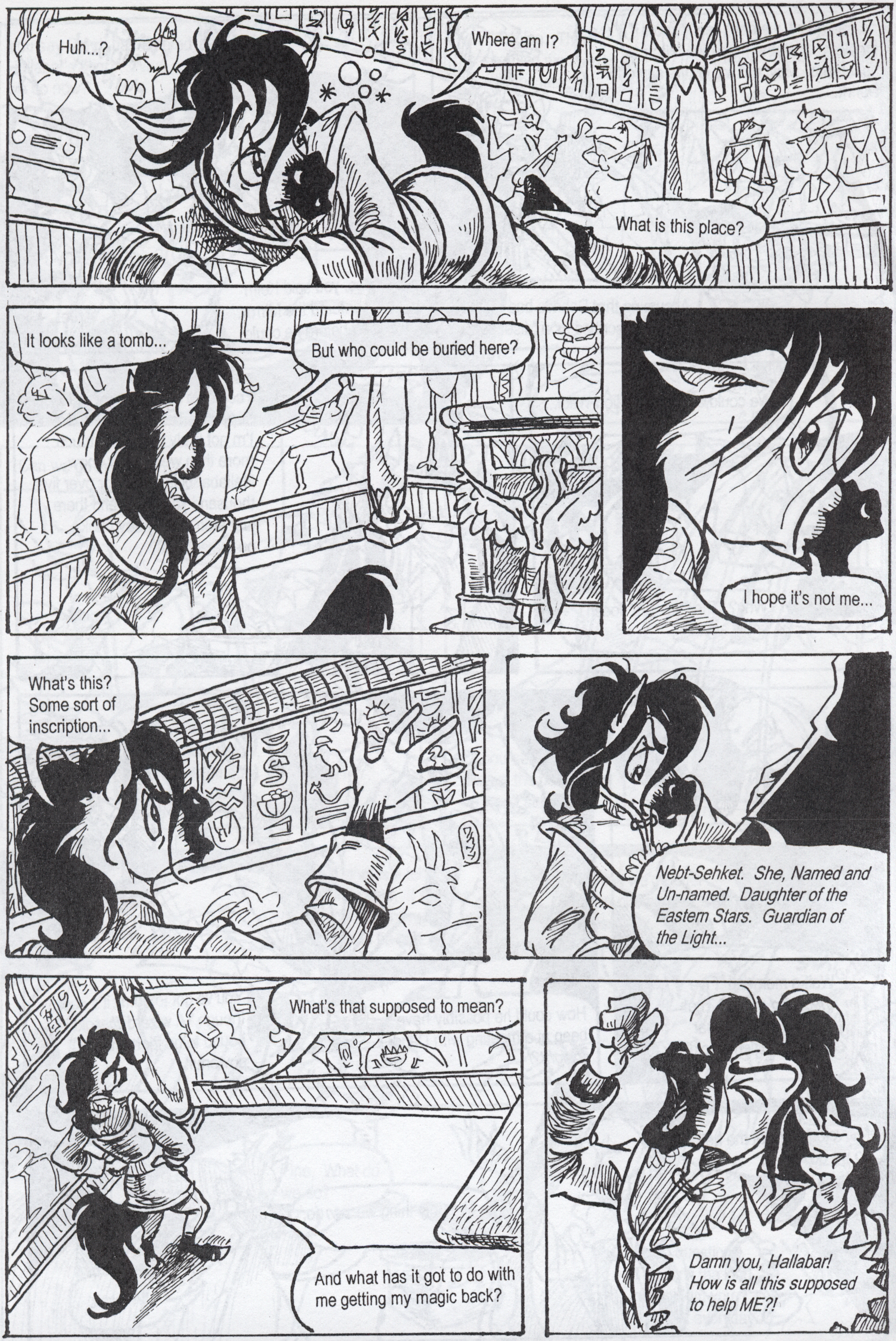

Not just a mirror...
A Point of All Reflection...
A chunk of Frozen Time...
All that is Past...
Every wound and insult...
Everything you want to forget...
All that waits in the Future...
Everything you fear might come to pass...
Lead you down to the Heart Of Darkness...

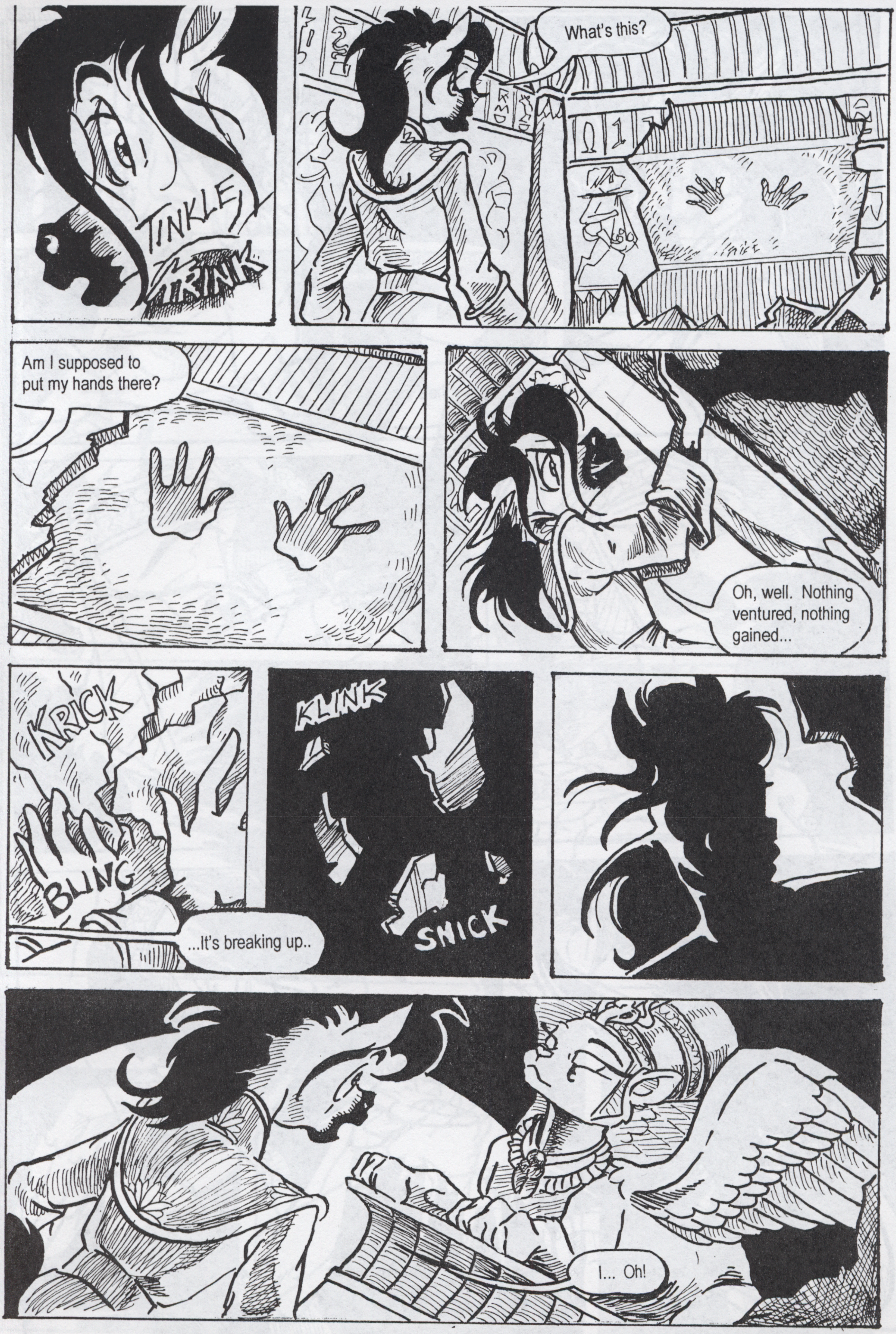

All you have to do is survive...
...Stop it!...
...STOP IT!...
...I can't stand anymore...
It hurts so much...
But it's not going to stop me!
Nothing can stop me from getting my magic back!
What's this?
A black glass globe...
But it's so small. What good is it to me?

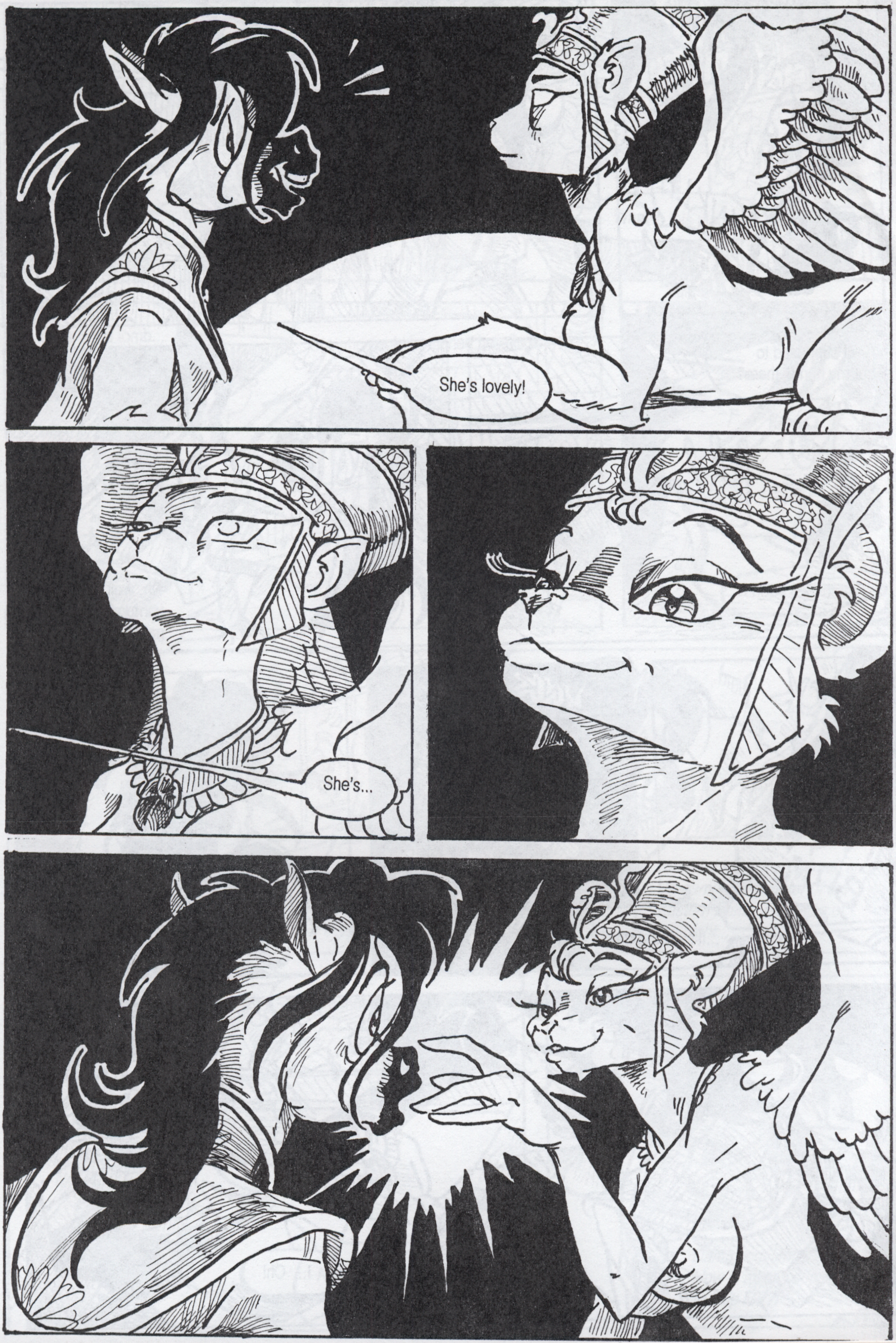

TING!
TING!
TINK!
BLING!
What...?
It's...It's *beautiful!*

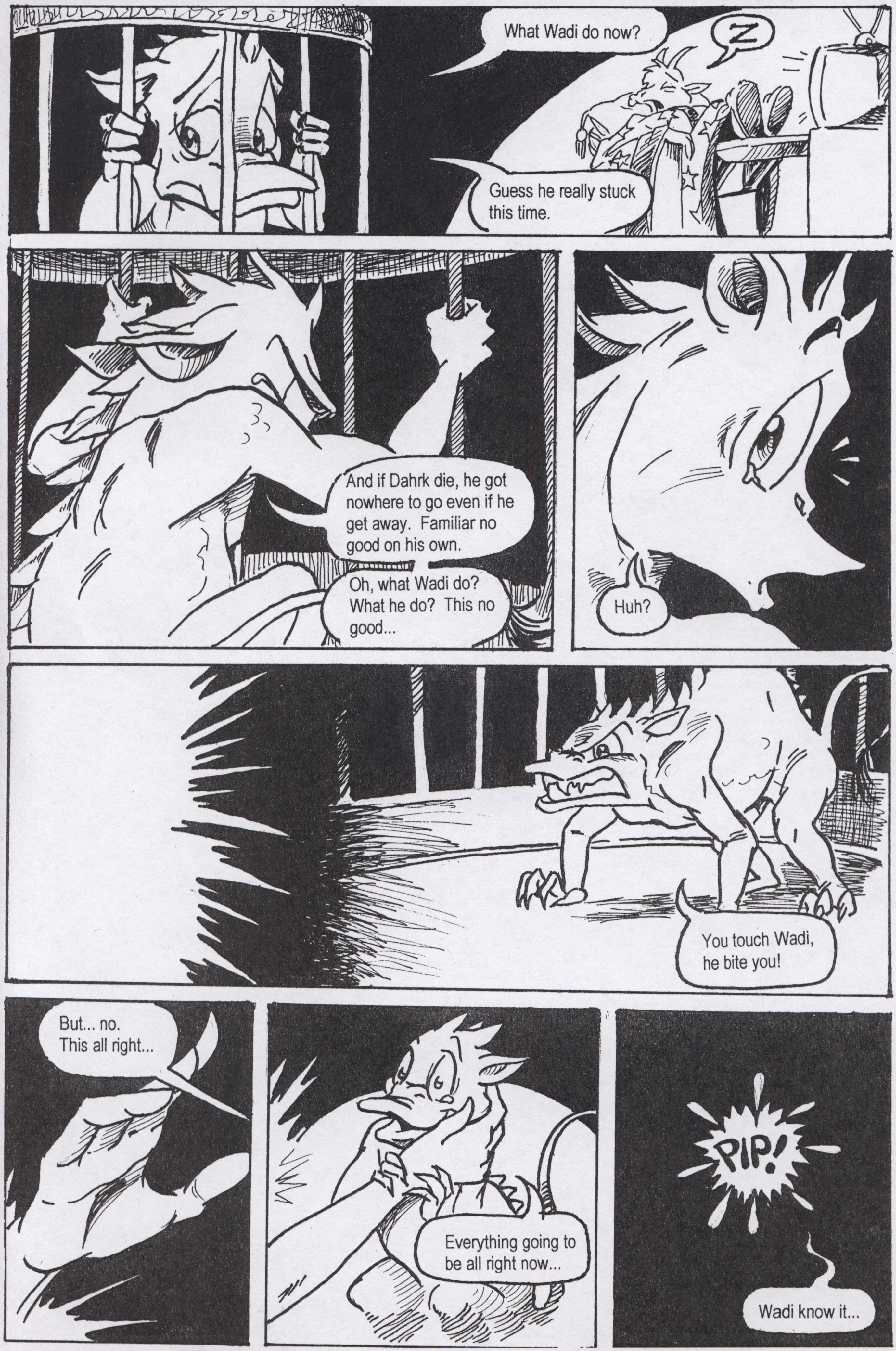

You say Dahrk has entered Hallabar's Mirror. What do we do now?
Nothing. There's nothing we *can* do It's too late.
Can we go in after him?
Sure. If we had a key. Unfortunately, Dahrk has the only one and we can't reach him!
SPLTT
Of course there's always the possibility he won't survive.
Dahrk is a tough little stud. If anyone could survive, it would be him.
I think we'd better start planning for that possibility.
SNAP!
YOOP
Fine. What do we do?
Good question. This isn't the kind of problem you confront everyday.

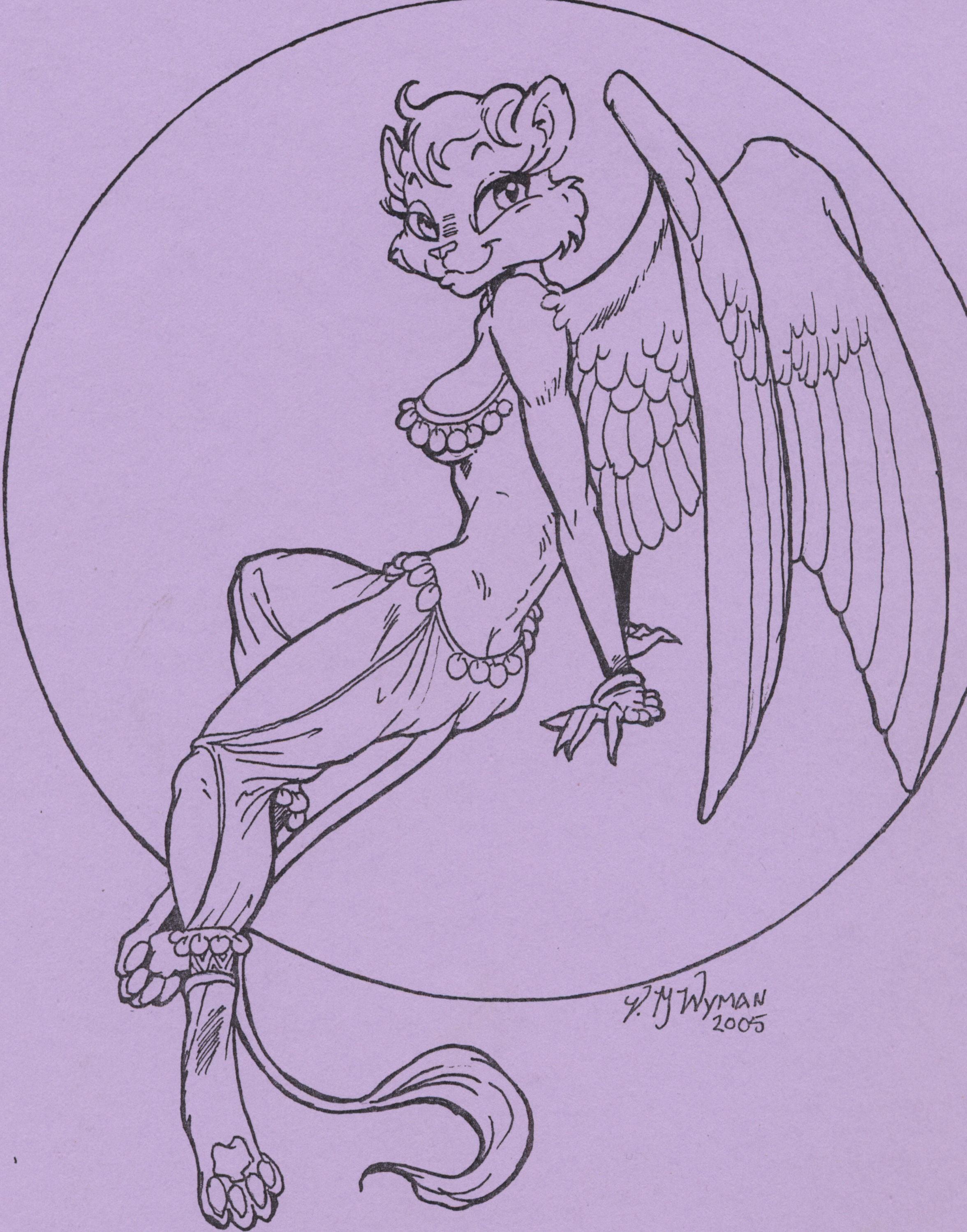

To be honest, we don't really know if it *is* a problem. Hallabar made the Mirror to heal Keim. Maybe it will do the same for Dahrk.
Assuming that Dahrk's bad attitude can be described as a "disease".
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH!
Besides, you said Keim never entered the Mirror. He died before he could.
True.
We could always question Wadi...
Why? The little turd doesn't know anything.
CRUNCH MUNCH
I could do some research, I suppose. But I warn you, Bram. I'm not likely to find out much more then we already know. Hallabar built his Mirror over five thousand years ago and there just aren't that many books on the subject.
SALSA HOT
Wait a moment! Five *thousand* years? That would make Hallabar over five millennia old!
How could he possibly have been at a meeting with Dahrk *tonight?!*
Beats me.
You've got to admit it's cool, though. A wizard *that* old is bound to be frighteningly powerful!
Marvelous! What the hell do we do?!
The only thing we *can* do.
CLICK
We wait.


Huh...?
Where am I?
What is this place?
It looks like a tomb...
But who could be buried here?
I hope it's not me...
What's this? Some sort of inscription...
Nebt-Sehket. She, Named and Un-named. Daughter of the Eastern Stars. Guardian of the Light...
What's that supposed to mean?
And what has it got to do with me getting my magic back?
Damn you, Hallabar! How is all this supposed to help ME?!


TINKLE
KRINK
What's this?
Am I supposed to put my hands there?
Oh, well. Nothing ventured, nothing gained...
KRICK
BLING
...It's breaking up..
KLINK
SNICK
I... Oh!


She's lovely!
She's...


What Wadi do now?
Z
Guess he really stuck this time.
And if Dahrk die, he got nowhere to go even if he get away. Familiar no good on his own.
Oh, what Wadi do? What he do? This no good...
Huh?
You touch Wadi, he bite you!
But... no. This all right...
Everything going to be all right now...
PIP!
Wadi know it...


V. M. Wyman
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